

Vegan Teen Athlete Nutrition • A Camping Menu

VOLUME XXIX, NO 1

# VEGETARIAN

JOURNAL

HEALTH ECOLOGY ETHICS

**Spring Holiday Goodies**

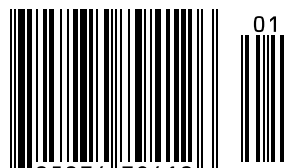
**Vegan Easter Eggs, Matzo Desserts, and More!**

*Seasonal Meals*

Two-Squash Sauté with Garlic and Basil (page 23)



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**Afghani Cuisine**

**Soup, Lentils, Rice Pilaf, and Eggplant!**

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# NUTRITION HOTLINE

REED MANGELS, PhD, RD



*This issue's Nutrition Hotline addresses whether someone who doesn't like vegetables can be a vegetarian and why potatoes may develop a green skin.*

**QUESTION:** "I want to become a vegetarian, but I hate most vegetables. Can I be a vegetarian without vegetables?" L.W., MA

**ANSWER:** The more you read about vegetarian diets, the more you'll see statements like, "Eat a variety of foods." That's because different foods provide different nutrients. For instance, dried beans supply protein and iron, while fruits are a good source of vitamin C.

Vegetables make important contributions when it comes to nutrition. Orange vegetables, like carrots and sweet potatoes, have generous amounts of vitamin A. Green vegetables, such as kale and collards, supply iron and calcium. All vegetables provide fiber and phytonutrients (simply put, nutrients that are important and that come from plants).

That's not to say that you can't get many of these vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients from other places if you don't eat vegetables. You can get some from fruits, get some from whole grains, and, if necessary, take a vitamin pill. The only problem is that vegetables are such low-calorie powerhouses that you may find that you have to eat a lot more fruit or a lot more beans to make up for what you're missing by not eating vegetables.

In addition, there may be some phytonutrients that are unique to vegetables that we don't even know about yet and that aren't in vitamin pills. If you don't eat vegetables, you will miss out on these potentially important phytonutrients.

Do you really not eat any vegetables, or is it that you really don't like cooked vegetables or certain vegetables? There's no law that says that you have to eat every vegetable. I think of myself as pretty healthy, but after trying a vegetable called kohlrabi several times, I decided this was one vegetable I could get along without. For variety's sake, it would be good to try to find a deep orange-colored vegetable or two, a green leafy vegetable or two, and a few other vegetables that you could eat regularly.

Maybe you decided when you were 3, 4, or 5 that you didn't like vegetables and haven't tried many of them since. Believe it or not, your tastes change as you get older, and what tasted bitter or unpleasant when you were a child may taste pretty good now.

Some people who swear they don't like vegetables admit to liking vegetables in Chinese restaurants. Ever wonder why this could be the case? Perhaps it's because vegetables in Chinese restaurants are frequently stir-fried—cooked quickly using minimal water so they don't get soggy and bitter but stay crisp and flavorful. Try eating some vegetables raw or just cooking them lightly and see if that makes them more appealing.

Take a tip from restaurants and serve vegetables with a dash of soy sauce or a little olive oil or balsamic vinegar. Try dipping raw vegetables into hummus or low-fat salad dressing.

*(Continued on page 25)*

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[www.vrg.org](http://www.vrg.org)

The *Vegetarian Journal* is one project of The Vegetarian Resource Group. We are a nonprofit organization that educates the public about vegetarianism and the interrelated issues of health, nutrition, ecology, ethics, and world hunger. To join VRG and receive *Vegetarian Journal* in the USA, send \$20 to The Vegetarian Resource Group, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203.

## NOTE FROM THE COORDINATORS

# SUPPORTING YOUNG VEGETARIANS



Since VRG's founding in 1982, we have been 'pro-family.' When the organization holds events, we always make sure that we have discounted children's prices or that the activity is free for kids. In the 1980s at inner-city Baltimore fairs, as well as suburban festivals, we have had thousands of kids make necklaces with beans and grains to acquaint children with vegetarian food. At one fair, when we were having the kids prepare fruit salad, we remember the inner-city parents asking for the recipe. Just having a mixture of fresh fruit was new to them! Over the years, we've assisted with vegetarian education for 4-H groups, Girl Scouts, Campfire Girls, and others.

We remember when vegetarians with children would come by our booth and we'd ask the kids why their parents were vegetarian. Sometimes they'd have no idea. Or an older teen would tell us that their family was vegetarian, but he/she was no longer. This is one reason why we consider it important for vegetarian families to make sure their children have contact with—or at least knowledge of—other veggie kids. It's great that, through our parents' e-mail discussion list (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/vrgparents/>), families who live near each other all around the country have arranged to get together. Also, we greatly appreciate our donors who support VRG's scholarships and internships through current donations and bequests.

We know members may disagree with the policies of various youth organizations, but we were fascinated to see that a 'Middle America' group such as the Boy Scouts now officially recognizes vegetarianism in a positive way. In their merit badge cooking handbook, they say: "Consider the needs of vegetarians when creating menus. People who do not eat meat, fish, or poultry are considered vegetarians." They continue, "Vegans ('vee-guns') are vegetarians who do not eat any kind of animal products, including dairy products and meat-based broths." The guidebook also states: "Substitute non-meat items for meats from the same food group. For example, a bean burrito would make a good substitute for a chicken burrito. Tasty substitutes are available for burgers, hot dogs, chicken nuggets, bacon, sausage, and all varieties of cold cuts. Some of these foods are made from tofu, which is a soybean product, or from seitan, a seasoned wheat gluten that is said to resemble meat in both taste and texture." In addition, the book includes the following: "Most Americans eat too much red meat and high-fat meats like bacon, which should be eaten sparingly."

For an example of vegan alternatives to a typical camp menu, see page 25.

Debra Wasserman & Charles Stahler

Handwritten signatures of Debra Wasserman and Charles Stahler in cursive script.

Coordinators of The Vegetarian Resource Group

## VRG's MEMORIAL AND HONORARY GIFT PROGRAM

How often have you wanted to make a gift in honor of a loved one or friend but weren't sure which charities are vegetarian-friendly, pro-environmental, or pro-animal rights? Please remember The Vegetarian Resource Group. You can make a gift in memory of a loved one or as a living tribute to honor someone you care about on a special occasion, such as a wedding or birth. We'll send an acknowledgement to you and to the recipient(s) you choose. Your gift will support educational outreach programs and help promote vegetarianism.

### Memorials & Honorary Gifts

In memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please send acknowledgement to:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*My name and address:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Make checks payable to The Vegetarian Resource Group and mail to P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203.*

Special thanks to Bobby Allyn, Ryan Andrews, Mike Billian, Gretchen Chlebowski, Soren Clarkwest, Jessica Dadds, Julia Driggers, Heather Gorn, Carole Hamlin, Lisa Martin, Jeannie McStay, Susan Petrie, Kim Roberts, Jenny Saccenti, Ben Shaberman, Terry Todesco, and Amy Vaughn, who acknowledged each VRG scholarship recipient, and also to Sonja Helman, who coordinated the complicated process of sending out scholarship applications for review.

## A Call for Veggie-Oriented Stamps

I am a practicing Jain, a strict vegetarian, and a stamp collector (philatelist). I would like to see that different countries—like the UK, USA, and Canada—issue stamps to attract people to adopting vegetarianism as a way of life.

I would appreciate if either you or any of your readers can help me with the list of stamps already issued on the theme of vegetarianism. My e-mail address is 4prakash@gmail.com.

I suggest your readers also write similar request to the stamp-issuing authorities to promote for awareness about vegetarians. I will appreciate it if you can cc to me your such requests for me to follow up with those authorities.

I sincerely thank you in advance for your support and cooperation.

Prakash M., via e-mail

## Animal Rights Versus Animal Wrongs

The very term 'animal rights' often causes people to put up a defensive barrier. In their minds, they think that if a person is for animal rights, that he or she must therefore be (largely) against human rights.

The term 'animal rights' is correct of course, but I've found the term 'animal wrongs' to be much more helpful in talking with people about various animal-related issues. It is natural for people to want to do right and unnatural for them to want to do wrong. We just have to help them see that it is right to be against animal wrongs.  
Craig C., via e-mail

## Thanks From Texas!

Hi, Sonja,

Just a quick note to thank you again for taking the time to help me with the materials request over the phone! We greatly appreciate the literature you and the VRG staff are sending for our group's continued grassroots outreach and will send whatever donation we can to help cover the costs.

We have been receiving more opportunities to 'plant seeds' at all types of venues, festivals, and conferences, so our outreach here in Houston is growing every year. Hopefully the number of vegetarians and vegans will as well!

Many thanks, and I look forward to speaking with you again in the spring! Kindest regards,  
Kristen O.

Society for PEACE (People for the Earth, Animals, Compassion, and Enlightenment)

Letters to the Editors can be sent to: Vegetarian Journal, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203. You may also e-mail letters to [vrg@vrg.org](mailto:vrg@vrg.org).

Coming in the Next Issue:

## VEGAN "COWBOY" CUISINE

**Plus:** Eggplant Dishes, Cold Salads for Warm Months, Making Flavored Tofu, Organic Farming, and more!

# Camels and Caravans

## From Afghanistan to the Vegan Table

By Zel Allen

**O**VER THE YEARS WHILE I'VE BEEN TEACHING vegan cooking classes, I've developed recipes for a number of different international cuisines. Recently, I was asked if I could teach an Afghan cooking class at the Valencia County Library in Valencia, California. Naturally, I said I could, though I had never actually encountered a single Afghan dish. A little research turned up some delightful recipes I adapted to the vegan palate.

Afghan cuisine, with its exotic spices and compelling aromas, is little known in this country, and Afghanistan is definitely not known for its vegetarian focus. What makes the cuisine uniquely compelling is the liberal use of herbs and spices that give dishes their exceptional quality reminiscent of Middle Eastern cuisine, yet different because of Indian influences. Afghan cooks favor herbs like garlic, dill, mint, and cilantro, while spices like cinnamon, cardamom, cumin, and saffron create rich diversity.

The few restaurants in Afghanistan only exist in large cities like Kabul and Kandahar. In the tribal provinces, all foods are homemade under what we might consider challenging conditions. Because few people have ovens, most of the meals are prepared over hot coals or wood, similar to meals that were cooked on our Southern plantations during the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

A bowl and a jug of water are part of the traditional hand-washing ritual before each meal, since foods are shared communally and eaten mostly with the right hand, though some items require both hands. Foods are served on a *sandali*, a low table, with everyone seated on a *toshak*, a cotton mattress that rests on a hand-

woven rug. During the cold winter, Afghans stay warm by placing a *manqal*, or charcoal brazier, under the table. The charcoal is burned beforehand and covered with warm ashes. In summer, when temperatures might reach 110 to 120 degrees, food is often served outdoors.

Traditional dishes are mostly centered on lamb, goat, and chicken, with a few veggies like eggplant, spinach, tomatoes, green bell peppers, chilies, and onions, though beans are substituted for meat among poor Afghans. Rice is a staple, though the short- and long-grain white rice Afghans prefer is less nutritious

than the brown rice I've substituted. Milk-based yogurt is an essential ingredient in many Afghan dishes, but I have turned the dishes vegan with plain and unsweetened soy yogurt.

I've taken many liberties in an effort to turn meaty recipes into vegan delights. Because of its mountainous and desert terrain, Afghanistan has limited regions for growing vegetables that could be used in cooking. Almonds and pistachios are native to

the country and are used as garnishes in savory dishes. Many desserts are also garnished with the nuts, though some include the nuts in the cooking process.

Finally, although Afghan recipes list copious amounts of vegetable oil in their savory dishes, I've made an effort to reduce the fat by cutting the oil measurements and leaving just enough to provide pleasing mouthfeel and great flavor. The adaptations I've made to the recipes leave the laborious cooking to the Afghan natives, while we prepare their delicious cuisine in our modern kitchens.



Qabili Bread with Spinach (opposite)

## AFGHANI LENTIL SOUP

(Serves 6-8)

*Hearty and satisfying, this lentil soup is a great start to an Afghan meal and also serves as a warming main dish soup when served with a tossed salad and hot whole-grain bread.*

- 3 large carrots, coarsely shredded
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 7½ cups water, divided
- 1 Tablespoon dried marjoram
- 2 teaspoons canola oil
- 2 teaspoons minced fresh mint leaves
- One 28-ounce can diced tomatoes, no salt added
- ¾ cup dried green or brown lentils
- ¼ cup low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon coriander seeds, crushed with a mortar and pestle
- 1 teaspoon dried dill weed

### GARNISH

- 1 cup plain, unsweetened soy yogurt or vegan sour cream
- 2 scallions, chopped

Combine the carrots, onions, ½ cup water, marjoram, oil, and mint in a 10- to 12-quart stockpot. Cook and stir over high heat for approximately 5-8 minutes or until the carrots and onions are softened and beginning to brown. Add more water as needed to prevent burning the vegetables.

Add the remaining water, tomatoes, lentils, soy sauce, coriander seeds, and dill weed and cover the stockpot. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to medium and simmer 45 minutes to 1 hour, until the lentils are softened.

To serve, ladle the soup into bowls and garnish with a dollop of yogurt or sour cream and a sprinkling of chopped scallions.

Total calories per serving: 186  
Carbohydrates: 32 grams  
Sodium: 406 milligrams

Fat: 3 grams  
Protein: 10 grams  
Fiber: 12 grams

## QABILI BREAD WITH SPINACH

(Serves 6)

*In Afghanistan, this dish may be considered a snack eaten between meals, but it certainly makes a captivating starter that sets the mood for the flavorful meal ahead.*

*At first appearance, one might exclaim, "It's a pizza!" However, the only resemblance is its appearance. Prepare the components separately, but assemble and warm the appetizer shortly before serving so that you can prevent the pita bread from becoming soggy.*

### FAVA BEAN SPREAD

- One 15-ounce can fava beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 Tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon zahtar\*
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

Place the fava beans into a medium-sized bowl and mash them into a thick, coarse purée with a fork or potato masher. Add the vinegar, oils, garlic, zahtar, salt, and pepper, and mix well. Set aside.

### SPINACH LAYER

- One 12-ounce package pre-washed spinach
- 1½-2 Tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1-2 Tablespoons water

Place the spinach in a large, deep skillet, add the balsamic vinegar and water, and cook over medium-

high heat for approximately 4 or 5 minutes, stirring frequently, until the spinach is completely wilted. In batches, spoon the spinach into a fine mesh strainer and press out any excess water. Use a kitchen scissors to cut the spinach into smaller pieces and set aside until ready to prepare the appetizer.

### 3 whole wheat pita breads

### GARNISH

- 1 large tomato, diced
- 2-3 Tablespoons toasted sesame seeds

Shortly before serving, assemble the appetizer as follows:

- Arrange the pita breads on a large baking sheet. Spoon a generous layer of the fava bean spread over the tops, covering almost to the edges.
- Top the bean layer with a layer of the spinach. Sprinkle the diced tomatoes over the spinach and finish with a sprinkle of sesame seeds over the top.
- Place the baking sheet under a broiler, approximately 3 inches from the heat, for 3-5 minutes. Remove and slice the breads into quarters. Transfer to an attractive serving dish and enjoy.

*\*Note: Zahtar is a blended seasoning mixture available in Middle Eastern groceries and some supermarkets. Though the ingredients vary slightly with different brands, the zahtar may include thyme, black pepper, anise, sumac, ground dried lime, sunflower seeds, salt, chickpeas, sesame seeds, and cumin.*

Total calories per serving: 204  
Carbohydrates: 32 grams  
Sodium: 734 milligrams

Fat: 6 grams  
Protein: 9 grams  
Fiber: 7 grams

## BHANJAN BURANI (EGGPLANT WITH YOGURT SAUCE)

(Serves 6)

*A delicious side dish, this traditional eggplant casserole or stew can be served hot or cold. It is in many ways akin to the American sandwich because so many Afghan households consider it a favorite food.*

*This recipe's long history can be traced back to a ninth-century Iraqi princess named Buran. Because eggplant was one of her favorite foods and was served at her wedding to the Caliph of Baghdad, the dish was named after her. The casserole has had many evolutions as it journeyed throughout the Middle East, Afghanistan, Spain, Morocco, and even into the Balkans.*

*Burani can also be a casserole without eggplant, using zucchini, spinach, or other vegetables. Those who adore eggplant will relish the exotic seasonings heightened with a smidgeon of cayenne. The traditional recipe uses layers of sliced eggplant and tomatoes, but I took liberties and quartered the slices for easier serving.*

*Bhanjan Burani is ideal for day-ahead preparation and can quickly be reheated in a 350-degree oven for 15-20 minutes.*

### Canola oil

**2 large eggplants, peeled and sliced approximately 3/8-inch thick**

**2 large tomatoes, sliced and quartered**

**1 large green bell pepper, sliced into thin rings and quartered**

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Lightly oil a 9" x 13" glass baking dish. Lightly brush both sides of the eggplant slices with oil and cut them into quarters.

Place a layer of the eggplant on the bottom of the baking dish. Top with a layer of tomatoes, followed with a layer of bell pepper slices. Repeat the layers until all of the eggplant, tomatoes, and peppers are in the baking dish.

### TOMATO SAUCE

**1/4 cups water**

**One 6-ounce can tomato paste**

**2-3 Tablespoons canola oil**

**2 cloves garlic, crushed**

**1/2 teaspoons whole coriander seeds, crushed with a mortar and pestle**

**1/4 teaspoons salt**

**1/4 teaspoon black pepper**

**1/4 plus 1/8 teaspoon cayenne**

Combine the ingredients in a medium-sized bowl and spoon it over the vegetables. Cover the baking pan with aluminum foil, shiny side down, and bake for 1 hour or until the eggplant is tender.

### CHAKAH (YOGURT SAUCE)

**1/2 cup plain, unsweetened soy yogurt**

**1 small clove garlic, crushed**

**1/4 teaspoon salt**

**1 teaspoon dried mint leaves**

While the eggplant is baking, combine the yogurt, garlic, and salt and set aside. When done, remove the baking dish from the oven and spread the *chakah* over the top. Garnish with the crushed mint leaves and serve.

*\*Note:* Traditionally, Afghan cooks cut the eggplant into 1/2-inch thick slices, salt both sides, and place them into a colander over a dish to catch any liquid. After 30 minutes or longer, they rinse off the salt and pat the slices dry with paper towels. The eggplant slices are then sautéed in oil before layering in the baking dish. However, this method uses enormous

quantities of oil, making the recipe a high-calorie, high-fat dish. My adaptation eliminates two steps and shortens the preparation time considerably.

Total calories per serving: 151    Fat: 8 grams  
Carbohydrates: 20 grams    Protein: 4 grams  
Sodium: 621 milligrams    Fiber: 8 grams

## KOFTA NAKHOD (VEGAN MEATBALLS AND CHICKPEAS) (Makes approximately 30-40 vegan meatballs)

*Old-fashioned comfort food, hearty meatballs are a hallowed symbol of down-to-earth home cooking and have provided wholesome dining in many countries throughout the world. In Afghanistan, meatballs are known as kebabs. Because the country was part of the silk route where exotic spices were sold and traded throughout the Middle East, spices like cinnamon, cumin, cardamom, and cloves became infused into the cuisine and added pleasing flavors and fragrant aromas to these vegan meatballs. Chickpea flour, another ingredient familiar to Middle Eastern cuisine, also contributes wholesome nutrition along with its pleasing nutty flavor.*

*Kofta Nakhod are especially tasty bathed in Subzee Borani, a richly flavored spinach and yogurt sauce. Also, if you prepare this dish a day ahead, you'll notice the Subzee Borani has become quite thick. Thin the sauce with 1 to 3 Tablespoons of water, if needed.*

### Several cups water

**1 medium onion, coarsely chopped**

**1 pound Lightlife Gimme Lean Sausage Flavor™**

**3/4 cup chickpea flour**



- 1/4 cup matzo meal
- 2 Tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 Tablespoon dried mint leaves
- 3 cloves garlic, finely minced
- 1 1/4 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon *char masala*\*
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne
- 1 recipe *Subzee Borani*

Fill a large, deep skillet with approximately 3-4 inches of water.

Place the onion into a food processor and process until finely grated. You may have to stop the machine and redistribute the ingredients. Transfer the grated onions to a large bowl.

Add the remaining ingredients, except the *Subzee Borani*, to the bowl and use your hands to combine all the ingredients thoroughly by squeezing the mixture through your fingers.

Bring the water in the skillet to a boil over high heat. Roll the *kofita* mixture into 1-inch balls between the palms of your hands and drop them into the boiling water in two or three batches. Boil for 4-5 minutes and use a slotted spoon to transfer them onto a clean plate.

When all the *kofita* are cooked, spoon them into the *Subzee Borani* and warm them gently.

*\*Note:* *Char masala* is a mixture of spices similar to the Indian *garam masala*. Make up a small batch with 3 Tablespoons ground cinnamon, 2 Tablespoons ground cumin, 1 Tablespoon ground cardamom, and 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves. Then, use small amounts to boost the seasoning in soups and vegetable stews.

Total calories per meatball: 31  
 Carbohydrates: 4 grams  
 Sodium: 199 milligrams  
 Fat: <1 gram  
 Protein: 3 grams  
 Fiber: <1 gram

## SUBZEE BORANI (SPINACH AND YOGURT SAUCE) (Serves 6-8)

*Yogurt is a homemade everyday staple in Afghan cuisine and is frequently employed as a garnish or a sauce for many dishes. The kofita, or meatballs, above become an immensely satisfying main dish paired with this deliciously tangy yogurt-based sauce enhanced with spinach and scallions. Be patient when cooking the scallions. This process might take up to 15 minutes to reach the ideal caramelized state that imparts rich flavor and body to the sauce.*

- 4 cups gently packed pre-washed bagged spinach
- 2 Tablespoons water
- 3 bunches scallions, trimmed and thinly sliced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tablespoon canola oil
- 3 cups plain, unsweetened soy yogurt
- 1 1/4 teaspoons salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

- 1 Tablespoon dried dill weed
- 1/2-1 jalapeño, seeds and ribs discarded and finely minced
- 1 recipe *Kofita Nakhod*

Place the spinach into a large deep skillet, add the water, and cook and stir over high heat for approximately 2-4 minutes or until the spinach is wilted, adding a Tablespoon or two of water, if needed. Spoon the spinach into a fine mesh strainer and thoroughly press out all of the excess water. Use kitchen scissors to coarsely chop the spinach, transfer to a bowl, and set aside.

In the same skillet, combine the scallions, garlic, and canola oil and cook over medium heat for 12-15 minutes or until the scallions are thoroughly softened and just beginning to brown. Add small amounts of water as needed to prevent the scallions from burning.

Add the cooked spinach, yogurt, salt, and pepper and mix well. Adjust the seasonings if needed and add the cooked *Kofita Nakhod*. Warm gently and serve.

Total calories per serving: 108  
 Carbohydrates: 12 grams  
 Sodium: 533 milligrams  
 Fat: 5 grams  
 Protein: 5 grams  
 Fiber: 4 grams



*Kofita Nakhod  
 in Subzee Borani*

## EASY PILAU (RICE PILAF)

(Serves 8-10)

*Considered a national Afghan main dish, Qabili Pilau is a stew usually made with chicken or lamb, along with onions, carrots, and raisins. My adaptation turns the recipe into a simple vegan side dish with a quartet of attractive garnishes that make an appealing presentation. Afghan cooks soak their white rice for 30 minutes to several hours before cooking to remove the starch and create grains that separate easily. I chose not to soak the rice and to make the Pilau with more nutritious brown basmati rice.*

**3 1/2 cups water**

**1 1/2 cups basmati brown rice**

**1 1/2 teaspoons salt**

### GARNISHES

**1/2-1 carrot, peeled and finely grated or minced**

**1/2 cup black raisins, plumped in warm water**

**1/3 cup toasted sliced or slivered almonds**

**1/4 cup pistachios**

Combine the water, rice, and salt in a 3- or 4-quart saucepan. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat.



The Sheik's Royal Firni

Reduce the heat to low and steam for 35-40 minutes or until the rice is tender and all the liquid has been absorbed.

Spoon the rice onto a large platter, heaping it high in the center. Sprinkle the garnishes over the rice and serve hot.

**\*Note:** Afghan women usually cook the carrots and raisins along with the rice and add a teaspoon of ground cumin. I found the blending of textures more appealing when using fresh uncooked carrots and raisins as garnishes.

Total calories per serving: 201    Fat: 5 grams  
Carbohydrates: 36 grams    Protein: 5 grams  
Sodium: 442 milligrams    Fiber: 3 grams

## THE SHEIK'S ROYAL FIRNI (AFGHANI PUDDING)

(Serves 6-8)

*A simple Afghani cornstarch pudding becomes a tantalizing dessert with a few embellishments using ingredients indigenous to the country of origin. The traditional dessert, called firni, includes cornstarch, milk, sugar, a hint of cardamom, and a sprinkle of nuts. But by increasing the cardamom and adding raisins and traditional Middle Eastern flavorings, the homey pudding morphs into an elegant presentation perfect for make-ahead planning or one that's easy to prepare a few hours before serving.*

**6 Tablespoons cornstarch**

**3 1/2 cups vanilla soymilk, divided**

**1 1/4 cups organic sugar**

**1 1/4 teaspoons ground cardamom**

**1/3 cup golden raisins**

**2 teaspoons orange blossom water**

**1 teaspoon rosewater**

**2-3 Tablespoons coarsely chopped pistachios**

**2-3 Tablespoons coarsely chopped almonds\***

**3-4 pitted dates**

Place the cornstarch into a small bowl and add 1/2 cup of the soymilk. Stir well to form a thin paste and set aside.

Pour the remaining soymilk into a 3-quart saucepan and heat the mixture over medium heat until hot. Add the sugar and cardamom and stir with a wire whip. Heat until almost boiling, but watch carefully to prevent burning or a messy boil-over. Adjust the heat as needed.

Add the cornstarch paste, stirring constantly, and bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium and simmer gently for approximately 5 minutes. The mixture will thicken slightly and firm into a pudding-like consistency when refrigerated.

Turn off the heat and stir in the raisins, orange blossom water, and rosewater. Spoon the pudding into small dessert dishes, teacups, or long-stemmed wine glasses and garnish the tops with the pistachios and almonds. Cut the dates into crosswise slices and top each serving with a date slice. Chill for several hours or overnight.

**\*Note:** To chop the almonds, place whole almonds into a heavy-duty zipper-lock bag and use a hammer to pound them into smaller pieces. The result will be both finely and coarsely chopped almonds.

Total calories per serving: 339    Fat: 5 grams  
Carbohydrates: 71 grams    Protein: 5 grams  
Sodium: 58 milligrams    Fiber: 2 grams

Zel Allen and her husband, Reuben, publish *Vegetarians in Paradise*, an online vegetarian magazine that 90,000 visitors read each month.

# Vegan Ground Round

By Chef Nancy Berkoff, RD, EdD, CCE

**FAST, WARM, AND COMFORTING ENTRÉES ARE** always welcome but especially during the winter. To rustle these up, select a veggie ground round product you like or a neutral-flavored veggie burger. If you have selected a veggie burger, you will be crumbling it before beginning to cook it.

There are basic ‘flavors’ that you can prepare with your ground round. You can then incorporate them into a dish, or cool and freeze them for later use.

The chart below shows some basic flavor blends that you can sauté before adding your vegan ground round or crumbled veggie burger selection.

To begin, preheat a sauté pan or frying pan and spray with vegetable oil. Once the vegetables in your mix are soft, you’ll add your veggie ground round, sauté, and stir until the mixture is heated. If you need to add some liquid to prevent sticking, you can use either vegetable broth or tomato juice, depending on the flavor you would like.

Once you have your ‘flavor mixture,’ you can combine with cooked pasta, potatoes, rice, barley, or other grains of your choice and serve as a fast, hot entrée. The chart features some ideas for each flavor combo.

If you have more time, you can layer your flavor mix with cooked pasta, rice, cooked diced potatoes, or cooked grains; some additional vegetables (such as grilled eggplant or zucchini, sliced cooked mushrooms, or diced mixed vegetables); and a sprinkle of shredded vegan cheese. Then, bake as a bubbly casserole.

## Veggie Ground Round Products

- Boca Ground Crumbles
- Lightlife Smart Ground Original and Smart Ground Taco and Burrito
- Morningstar Farms Ground Meatless Crumbles
- Yves The Good Ground Round Original and Mexican

‘Flavor blend’	Vegetables and Spices	Combine With or Serve Over
<b>Southwestern/ Central American</b>	Diced onions, bell peppers, or your choice of chilies (depending on the heat you like), diced and drained canned tomatoes, and cut corn	Steamed hominy, crumbled cornbread, steamed rice, soft or crisp tortillas, or steamed quinoa
<b>Cuban</b>	Onions, bell peppers, a hint of cumin, a hint of garlic, a hint of cinnamon, and raisins	Steamed white or brown rice or <i>fideo</i> (thin, short pasta that resembles angel hair)
<b>Lebanese/ Middle Eastern</b>	Onions, garlic, mint, and cinnamon	Steamed rice, traditional or toasted couscous, bulgur, or shredded pita or lavash bread
<b>Mediterranean</b>	Minced garlic, onions, oregano, basil, diced mushrooms, and drained and diced tomatoes	Your choice of ‘short’ pasta (such as rotini or small shells), steamed greens, or toasted, sliced Italian bread

## A REVIEW OF RECENT SCIENTIFIC PAPERS RELATED TO VEGETARIANISM

### Vegetarian Low-Carbohydrate Diet No More Effective Than Vegetarian High-Carbohydrate Diet for Weight Loss

High-protein, low-carbohydrate diets have been promoted as weight loss diets. Typically, these diets feature high amounts of animal protein, saturated fat, and total fat; limited carbohydrate; and little fiber. Researchers wondered what would happen if they modified this type of diet to make it vegetarian; replaced the animal protein with protein from gluten, soy, nuts, vegetables, and cereals; increased the carbohydrate somewhat; replaced saturated fat sources like cheese and bacon with unsaturated fats from nuts, vegetable oils, soy, and avocado; and roughly tripled the fiber using mainly soluble fiber from oats, barley, and some vegetables. This diet is markedly different from the Atkins diet (a typical high-protein, low-carbohydrate diet), which in the early stages is reported to contain 20 grams of carbohydrate or less, approximately 28 percent of calories from protein, and approximately 55 percent of calories from fat. In contrast, the vegetarian weight loss diet, or 'low-carbohydrate diet,' included 130 grams of carbohydrate daily, 31 percent of calories from protein, and 43 percent of calories from fat.

Researchers wanted to see how the low-carbohydrate diet compared to a high-carbohydrate vegetarian diet based on lowfat dairy and whole grain products. They studied 47 overweight men and women with high blood LDL (bad) cholesterol levels. Subjects were assigned to either the high-carbohydrate or the low-carbohydrate diet for four weeks with calories adjusted so that each group only got approximately 60 percent of the calories they would need to maintain their weight. Weight loss was similar for both groups—approximately 8½ pounds on average over the four weeks. This suggests that reducing the amount of carbohydrate in a vegetarian diet and increasing the protein does not improve weight loss. The low-carbohydrate diet did lead to a greater reduction in blood pressure, LDL and total cholesterol, and triglyceride levels than did the higher carbohydrate diet. Since the two diets differed in several ways, we do not know if the results seen were due to the higher protein/

lower carbohydrate content of the low-carbohydrate diet, to the type of carbohydrate used, or to some other factor. Additional study is needed to see if a low-carbohydrate vegetarian diet can be used long-term for weight loss and to reduce LDL cholesterol levels.

Jenkins DJA, Wong JMW, Kendall CWC, et al. 2009.

The effect of a plant-based low-carbohydrate ("Eco-Atkins") diet on body weight and blood lipid concentrations in hyperlipidemic subjects. *Arch Intern Med* 169:1046-54.

### Medications for Vegetarians

When a British psychiatrist's patient refused to take non-vegetarian medications, the psychiatrist contacted drug manufacturers to determine whether their products contained ingredients derived from animals. He inquired about antipsychotic, antidepressive, and anti-manic medications and found out that almost three-quarters of them were indeed vegetarian. Those that were not vegetarian included medications in capsules (made from animal-derived gelatin) and medications containing animal-derived lactose and magnesium stearate. He did not ask if the products were tested on animals. Products vary from company to company and in different countries; this report was from the UK. In some instances, another company may make a vegetarian version of the medication. Changes in medication should not be made without consulting with your health care provider.

McAllister-Williams H, Ramplin S. 2009. Vegetarian psychotropics: a survey of psychotropic medications suitable for vegetarians. *Hum Psychopharmacol Clin Exp* 24:248-50.

### British Vegetarians Have Lower Rates of Some Cancers

A recent large study from the UK examined rates of 20 different cancers in more than 60,000 British men and women. Study subjects were classified as meat-eaters, non-meat-eaters who ate fish (fish-eaters), and vegetar-

ians. Subjects were studied for an average of 12 years. Compared to meat-eaters, vegetarians had lower rates of bladder cancer and of cancers like non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and multiple myeloma. Vegetarians and fish-eaters had lower rates of stomach cancer. Overall, vegetarians and fish-eaters had a lower risk of cancer compared to meat-eaters. A possible explanation for the higher rates of bladder cancer and stomach cancer in meat-eaters is that nitrates found in some processed meats may increase the risk of these cancers. Mutagenic compounds and viruses in meat may partially explain the higher rates of lymphoma and myeloma in meat-eaters. This study also found higher rates of cervical cancer in both vegetarians and fish-eaters. Because of the small number of cases and the fact that the primary risk factor for cervical cancer is human papillomavirus, the researchers suspect their results are due to chance or to differences in screening for cervical cancer in different groups. Overall, the results of this study suggest that a vegetarian diet plays a role in reducing risk of some cancers.

Key TJ, Appleby PN, Spencer EA, et al. 2009. Cancer incidence in British vegetarians. *Br J Cancer* 101: 192-97.

## Four Lifestyle Factors Appear Important For Reducing Risk of Chronic Diseases

Four factors appear to be very important in reducing the risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and stroke. What are they? Never smoking, not being obese (BMI under 30), being physically active for 3½ hours or more a week, and eating fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and little or no red meat.

A study of more than 23,000 German adults over an 8-year period was used to show just how important these factors are. At the start of the study, participants were given a score of 0 or 1 in each category (1=never smoked, 0=current or former smoker, etc.). Subjects could have a total score of 0-4, with 4 being the best score. Subjects with a score of 4 had a 78 percent lower risk of having any of the chronic diseases compared with subjects with a score of 0. Those with a score of 4 had a 93 percent lower risk of having type 2 diabetes, 81 percent lower risk of heart attack, 50 percent lower risk of stroke, and 36 percent lower risk of cancer compared with subjects with a score of 0. Subjects with a score of 1, 2, or 3 were between those with a score of 0 and

those with a score of 4 in terms of their risk of these diseases. Having only one healthy behavior as compared to none still cut the risk of chronic disease in half.

How would you score? Have you never smoked? Do you have a healthy weight? Are you physically active at least 3½ hours a week? Is your diet plant-based with little or no red meat? If you can answer yes to all of these questions, you have markedly reduced your risk of a number of health problems.

Ford ES, Bergmann MM, Kroger J, et al. 2009. Healthy living is the best revenge. *Arch Intern Med* 169:1355-62.

## The American Dietetic Association Publishes a New Position Paper on Vegetarian Diets

The American Dietetic Association (ADA) published their updated position on vegetarian diets in the July 2009 *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*. The ADA's position on vegetarian diets is, "appropriately planned vegetarian diets, including total vegetarian or vegan diets, are healthful, nutritionally adequate, and may provide health benefits in the prevention and treatment of certain diseases. Well-planned vegetarian diets are appropriate for individuals during all stages of the life cycle, including pregnancy, lactation, infancy, childhood, and adolescence, and for athletes." Although in the past the ADA position paper has included support for vegetarian diets throughout life, this is the first time this endorsement has appeared in the actual position statement.

The paper also includes information about key nutrients for vegetarians, health benefits of vegetarian diets, and the role of vegetarian diets in prevention and treatment of chronic diseases, such as obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and cancer. This paper was developed over a 2-year period and is based on the most recent research available. It is a very complete source of information for the media, health care professionals, and others with questions about vegetarianism. The complete position paper is available on the ADA's website: <[eatright.org/ada/files/Vegetarian PositionFINAL.pdf](http://eatright.org/ada/files/Vegetarian_PositionFINAL.pdf)>.

Craig WJ, Mangels AR. 2009. Position of the American Dietetic Association: Vegetarian diets. *J Am Diet Assoc* 109:1266-82.

# THE VEGAN TEEN ATHLETE

BY JULIA DRIGGERS

**V**EGAN TEEN ATHLETES ARE NO DIFFERENT FROM any other athletes. “I don’t have to do anything special,” remarks Jacob, a 14-year-old baseball and basketball player, who has been vegan since birth. Some people think that having strict dietary principles can put an athlete at a disadvantage and inhibit their performance. However, this is not true. One famous athlete, Olympic sprinter Carl Lewis, won nine gold medals after making the switch to a vegan diet. Vegan athletes who eat a variety of food and receive enough calories are able to perform at every level, from recreational to elite. The same holds true for vegan teen athletes. “I have never had any nutritional issues being a vegan teen athlete,” Jacob states.

## BASIC NUTRITION

Nutrition for a vegan teen athlete is not complicated. Vegan teen athletes should receive a majority of their calories from complex carbohydrates, a moderate amount from protein, and a low-to-moderate amount from fat. In general, vegetarian athletes should receive 0.6 to 0.8 grams of protein per pound of body weight and 2.7 to 4.5 grams of carbohydrate per pound of body weight. For the vegan teen, all these requirements can be met by eating a variety of foods and getting enough calories. Typical foods that vegan teens eat include whole grain bagels, English muffins, pasta, veggie burgers, green vegetables, hummus, and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

Clarissa, a 17-year-old soccer player and vegan since age 11, feels that eating vegan and staying fit is easy. “I eat oatmeal made with soymilk and usually topped with raisins, bananas, cinnamon, and vegan butter for breakfast. For lunch, I may have a mixed vegetable-tofu stir-fry with rice, and for dinner I may have lentil soup, a baked potato, and vegetables like broccoli or peas.”

With a varied diet, vegan athletes can easily meet nutrient requirements; however, it is also important for teens to pay attention to specific nutrients, like vitamin B<sub>12</sub> and vitamin D. Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> can be found in fortified foods, including soymilk, cereals, and nutritional yeast. Vitamin D can be found in fortified foods, such as soymilk and ready-to eat cereals, and can be received from 15 minutes of sunlight on the face and hands each day during the summer months. Eating these types of fortified foods every day and being outside in the sun will help teens receive the proper amount of these nutrients.

Female athletes should also consider monitoring their iron intake. Foods high in iron include dark green leafy vegetables, soybeans, tofu, lentils, quinoa, fortified cereal, and raisins. To help maximize absorption, have an item high in vitamin C—such as orange juice, tomato sauce, or broccoli—along with foods high in iron. A female athlete can also take an iron supplement to increase iron stores.

## Suggestions for Vegan Teen Athletes:

- Vegan athletes should eat a balanced diet, but they should not worry about food too much. As long as they are eating enough and eating different types of food, they will be healthy.
- Getting enough protein from different sources, like nuts, beans, soy products, and whole grains, helps keep athletes strong.
- Eat foods high in vitamin B<sub>12</sub> and vitamin D, such as fortified soymilk, cereals, and nutritional yeast, and spend 15 minutes in the sun each day. These nutrients will help give you energy.
- Female vegan athletes should be especially careful about getting enough iron.
- Baking vegan cupcakes and dishes to share with the teammates is fun! It is a great way to introduce new foods to others and to enjoy time with your friends.

## FUELING UP

For any athlete, nutrition before, during, and after an event is important to replenish lost energy stores and build muscle mass. For the teen athlete, this can be tough because of strict school schedules. Ideally, an athlete should eat either a 200-calorie snack one hour before a sports event or a 400-calorie snack two hours before a sports event.

The teen athlete, who can't eat during classes, should eat a larger meal at lunch or bring a 200-calorie snack to eat right after school. In general, for every 200 calories consumed, an athlete should wait one hour before exercising. For example, if a 600-calorie meal is eaten at lunchtime, an athlete should wait three hours before exercising. To increase the calories at lunchtime, try adding the snack ideas in the sidebar below to meals.

200-Calorie Snacks	400-Calorie Snacks
1 crunchy granola bar	½ cup guacamole dip with 1 cup corn chips
1 banana with 1 TB peanut butter	8 whole wheat crackers with ¼ cup hummus
6 ounces soy yogurt with fruit	1 bagel and 2 TB peanut butter
¼ cup mixed nuts	½ cup trail mix
1 ounce hard pretzels with ½ cup fruit juice	2 cups calcium-fortified orange juice and a granola bar

Fueling with food and a sports drink during an event is required when an athlete has been exercising for 90 minutes or longer. After 90 minutes, an athlete should consume either 16 ounces of water and a snack high in carbohydrates, such as a banana, or 16 ounces of a sports drink or diluted fruit juice (8 ounces of juice mixed with 8 ounces of water) or low-sodium vegetable juice. For shorter bouts of exercise, water is the best liquid to drink during an event. In addition, water should be drunk liberally throughout the day.

Eating a snack high in carbohydrates and moderate in protein 15-30 minutes after an event can replenish energy stores. Teens who are traveling to games or don't have time to eat a meal right after events should pack snacks: an apple with peanut butter, a nut butter and

jelly sandwich, a hummus and vegetable pita, a vegan muffin with almond butter, a Clif or Odwalla Bar, or orange juice with a handful of mixed nuts. Eating shortly after activity is important and helps athletes to replenish energy and build muscle mass.

With any athlete who is training at intense levels, weight loss can be a concern. To prevent weight loss during intense training periods, athletes should consume more calories to maintain body weight. "During cross country season, I always have to consciously eat more than usual to maintain my body weight," explains Sarah, a vegan high school athlete. "I do this by eating more snacks throughout the day and having an after-dinner snack." Adding more snacks throughout the day or adding extra calories to foods, such as oils on vegetables, vegan cheeses on potatoes and casseroles, and margarine on pasta and on rice, can help to maintain an athlete's weight. If problems with weight loss do become an issue, consider speaking with a registered dietitian.

## DEALING WITH COACHES AND TEAMMATES

Being a vegan teen and being on a sports team can hold some challenges, especially during group snacks and team get-togethers. Sarah, the cross country runner, feels that these problems can be overcome: "Since I've been vegan my whole life, I'm used to preparing for and dealing with any issues, but I've never had a huge problem. I bring snacks if I think I'll need them."

In addition to bringing snacks, other vegan teen athletes make it a point to tell their coaches at the beginning of the season about their dietary preferences and request that, when snacks are brought, some are vegan. It is also a good idea for teens to let their teammates know they are vegan, especially when teams hold get-togethers and parties. "For pasta dinners, the host usually makes vegan pasta and cheese-less garlic bread because we have four vegan girls and other girls with various food allergies on the team," Sarah explains. "I sometimes bring a snack or baked good to share with my teammates." Bringing vegan dishes to a party or snacks to share is a great way to enjoy food and time with teammates. Plus, it is a wonderful opportunity to introduce others to different types of cuisines.

## CONCLUSION

Being a vegan teen athlete is easy. By eating a variety of foods and getting enough calories, vegan teens can perform just as well as their teammates, if not better.

**Julia Driggers wrote this article while doing a dietetic internship with The Vegetarian Resource Group.**



## 2009 VEGETARIAN RESOURCE GROUP SCHOLARSHIP RUNNER-UP ENTRY

Thank you to the St. Louis Vegetarian Society (STLVS) for sponsoring a runner-up prize for our annual vegetarian scholarship, which was awarded to Dakota Young for 2009. The STLVS is very proud of all the students' efforts to support our interests as vegetarians.

**DAKOTA YOUNG** from South Dakota had this to say in her entry:

"I am a Lakota woman, and as a Lakota, I practice our traditional ceremonies. The reason practicing my culture is hard is the fact that we eat so many different animals: snake, badger, and buffalo. The elders of my community accept that I am a vegetarian but still think that I should eat the traditional meal. The greatest success I had was getting the school to allow vegetarian options and using computers for dissection. I was so excited! I am still trying to overcome the challenge of getting the approval of my elders but think that, if I could tell them that being vegetarian would help prevent diabetes in future generations, I could get their approval.

"I have been a vegetarian for over 10 years. I became vegetarian after I was severely food poisoned during the mad cow scare. At first I was traumatized from the effect that had, but during the refrain from eating meat, I did research on what it would be like to be a vegetarian and the many benefits I would get from being vegetarian. I then looked into animal rights and quickly became an activist from what I researched. It was hard to let people hear what I was trying to say since I was only 8, but now I always thank my diet after I get an award or honor. I told people to save the whales after I was named Homecoming Queen. A lot of people know me as a 'hippie' but respect my decision.

"My school cafeteria now provides choices like veggie burgers, veggie lasagna, and PB and J sandwiches. They make a small batch of vegan pancakes and other goods that require eggs and milk and use substitutes. Those who identify themselves as vegetarian/vegan on the lunch cards can bring outside food and drinks (healthy ones!). My friend Arna and I also pushed for snacks during the school day because we are always hungry, and when our school moved to block scheduling, we got the snacks implemented. We now have snacks during our second block class.

"The process to actually have the vegetarian options was arduous. The administration was concerned that we would be costing them money and that some people may object to the substitutions. They thought that students would not be getting nutrients and vitamins and that some allergies may arise in soy and certain fruits. Arna and I stressed that it was an option and that students may choose to have the meals or not. We did several presentations on diabetes and obesity in our Native American communities and how being vegetarian greatly lowered the risks and how much healthier the options would be. We gave an example of the menus and what is contained in each meal. We suggested that students be given a card to show the cooks and the security guards that we are vegetarian and have permission to bring our own lunches if necessary. We proposed the warning to students that, if they want to have a vegetarian meal, they should see if they have allergies or if they are unsure to avoid the option.

"We made several presentations and did a lot of research that the administration considered and eventually pulled through after we got so many signatures and gave a quick run-through of the new rules and options. We showed the warning sign and the card that would be given. We were under strict instructions that only those who are 'legitimate' vegetarians/vegans are offered the card to bring outside food. Arna and I had to give instructions and lectures but we got the newly established options available."

Dakota's friend Arna Two Hawk said, "Dakota made vegan cookies and brownies for student council when they were having a bake sale and encouraged people to drink water. Dakota's family and my family both attend the same church and both practice the Lakota ceremonies. We are Lakota, and when we do sun dances, we are required to eat animals. At wakes and pow-wows, we are often served beef stew and buffalo jerky. Some elders frown upon us for not accepting the meals, while others understand and respect our decisions. It has been really hard, but we each incorporated that vegan beef stew and fruit leather be used instead of real beef and buffalo. Being Lakota and a vegetarian is hard, but we will stand with our beliefs. The good thing about everyone getting along with



Dakota is that they are more open and accepting to the vegetarian lifestyle we have chosen. After being named MVP or All-Tourney, Dakota thanks her vegetarian diet every time. Aside from the animal rights, we have also founded the recycling group and are chairs for Unci Maka week, which is the preservation of Grandmother Earth. Dakota really deserves this scholarship because, being Lakota and being in a state where rodeo is the state sport, she doesn't have a lot of followers in her lifestyle, but does get acceptance. She does have a lot of admirers and fans, and receiving this award will help her in her efforts of bringing greater awareness to vegetarianism and animal rights."

One of Dakota's teachers said, "First off, I want to say Dakota is such a sweetheart. She is adored by faculty and student body alike, which showed when she was recently named Homecoming Queen. Dakota is highly active in community services and is often seen tutoring students from the Rosebud Alternative Program, playing the piano at church, judging for royalty at pow-wows, taking charge for the Homecoming, and going door to door to collect food, blankets, and other necessities for the homeless."

Dakota stated, "I do not eat any type of meat. I do not eat fish, poultry, beef, pork, or other animals that

Lakotas eat. I prefer soymilk and organic foods to the real things, but there are no stores in my area that offer these vegetarian foods... Many vegetarian foods are high-priced because we are from a community where there are not very many vegetarians, if any. I have not had a veggie burger at home in a year or homemade veggie lasagna in about seven months.

Dakota hopes to pursue degrees in chemical engineering, math, and pharmacy.

Graduating and becoming a positive example to her sisters and the younger generation is important to her. After her schooling, Dakota said, "I plan on returning to Rosebud to work at the Indian Health Services. As a pharmacist, I would encourage a diet of vegetarian lifestyle to prevent diabetes."

Ultimately, Dakota hopes to work with Doctors Without Borders. After that, she would like to become a math teacher for an alternative program.

*For information about applying for VRG's two \$5,000 college scholarships for high school seniors who have promoted vegetarianism, visit <[www.vrg.org](http://www.vrg.org)>. Entries for the 2010 competition must be postmarked by Saturday, February 20. To read information about prior winners, see <[www.vrg.org/student/scholar.htm](http://www.vrg.org/student/scholar.htm)>.*

## NOTES FROM THE VRG SCIENTIFIC DEPARTMENT

### THE VEGETARIAN RESOURCE GROUP OUTREACH

VRG Nutrition Advisor Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, was co-author of the latest American Dietetic Association (ADA) position paper on vegetarian diets. In addition, Reed reported that the newest edition of the *Pediatric Nutrition Handbook*, which is published by the American Academy of Pediatrics and sent free to all member pediatricians, contained a chapter on vegetarianism that was positive and used VRG poll information, as well as meal plans that Reed Mangels and Ginny Messina created. The chapter also quoted the American Dietetic Association position paper on vegetarianism.

### VRG IN THE NEWS

VRG Nutrition Advisor Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, was interviewed about the ADA paper mentioned above by Global Television News in Canada, Supreme Master Television, *VIVmag* (a digital magazine covering health, nutrition, style, travel, and other lifestyle topics), and *The Washington Post*. Reed granted interviews to *The York Daily Record/Sunday News* in York County, PA, about how to eat like a vegetarian, to *Vegetarian Times* about common pitfalls, and to *USA Today* about vegetarian bone health. In addition, she was interviewed by *American Baby* magazine about vegetarian babies and children and about the new ADA position paper, by *The Los Angeles Times* about vegetarian children, by *Chesapeake Family* magazine about vegetarian kids growing up in non-vegetarian families, and by *Current Health, A Weekly Reader* magazine about vegetarianism and teenagers. Finally, Reed and longtime VRG volunteer Sarah Ellis, MS, RD, were interviewed about lifelong vegetarians and vegans by *The Boston Globe*.

# Matzo Desserts and Vegan Easter Eggs

By Chef Nancy Berkoff

**I**T'S THAT TIME OF YEAR! THERE ARE LOTS OF PLACES online where you can order vegan Easter candy and find vegan chocolate bunnies, chocolate eggs, or jelly beans. In fact, it is sort of difficult to avoid a complete 'sugar fest' at this time of year.

You can also find lots of pre-prepared Passover desserts in the market and online. It's a bit more difficult to find vegan versions, as eggs play a large part in leavening Passover cookies and cakes.

The recipes in this article are not necessarily low in sugar, nor do they necessarily meet all Passover restrictions, which can vary from family to family. We have tried to create recipes and ideas that can be adapted, if necessary. For example, one recipe calls for crisped rice cereal. Crisped wheat cereal can easily be substituted. Where chocolate chips are called for, dried fruit can be used, unless the chocolate chips are to be melted.

If you would like to avoid a lot of sugar and chocolate, we have included a carrot *halwah*, or carrot pudding recipe. It is not totally low in calories or lowfat, but it has the advantage of containing lots of carrots! *Halwah*, a Southwestern Asian dessert, cannot be shaped into interesting forms, but it adds a lot of color to any holiday table.

## MAKING 'NESTS'

If you have some time to bring some culinary artistry to the table, you can make 'nests' for your holiday treats by melting equal parts of vegan chocolate and nut butter together; stirring in shredded, dried coconut; and then shaping the mixture into small 'nests.' After they cool, you can fill them with Easter or Passover goodies! If you like, you can place the nests into cupcake papers so they hold their shape and are easy to transport. If you have a favorite thick cupcake or cake frosting recipe, you can stir in shredded coconut and build nests as well.

## HELPFUL TIPS

- Using the 'nest' combo above, roll egg-shaped chocolate or frosting in chopped nuts or toasted sesame seeds.
- If you would like to prepare some shaped goodies, scour the stores and the Internet for small molds. You can fill these with melted chocolate, crisped rice, and *Matzo Nut Brittle* (below) and then set them out on your holiday table or give them as holiday presents.
- Decorate egg-shaped chocolate with colored coconut. Add a few drops of food coloring to warm water and then add dried, shredded coconut. Allow to soak for a few minutes, until color is absorbed. Drain the water, squeeze a bit, spread out on a plate or cutting board, and allow to dry before using.
- Break matzo into small squares and dip one end into melted chocolate or nut butter and then into toasted sesame seeds; shredded, dried coconut; or even grated orange zest. Create a small platter of many flavored matzo snacks.
- If you would prefer not having such a food-centered treat, locate some plastic Easter eggs and fill with seasonal 'fun.' Depending on the age of the recipients (since we don't want to have the wrong things swallowed!), fill with small seed packets (to start a spring garden), colorful mini-pads and pencils, and even the name of a pen pal!

## MATZO NUT BRITTLE

(Serves approximately 14)

*Be careful working with the hot sugar!*

**2 cups crumbled matzo**  
**Vegetable oil spray**

**2 cups sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)**  
**1/2 cup water**  
**1/2 teaspoon vanilla or almond extract**  
**3 Tablespoons softened nonhydrogenated vegan margarine**  
**1 1/2 cups chopped nuts (Almonds, walnuts, or pistachios work well.)**

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Spread matzo in a single layer in a large shallow baking pan and toast, stirring and shaking pan occasionally, approximately 5-10 minutes or until golden. Place in a large bowl and set aside.

Spray a baking pan with oil and set aside.

Put sugar, water, and extract into a large pot and slowly bring to a boil, stirring until sugar is dissolved. Continue cooking, stirring to prevent burning on the bottom and sides, until syrup is a deep golden color.

Remove pan from heat and carefully stir in margarine with a wooden spoon. (Plastic or metal spoons cannot be used.) When you stir in the margarine, the mixture will bubble, so be careful. When bubbling begins to subside, immediately stir in toasted matzo and nuts and quickly pour into the oiled baking pan, spreading to smooth out. Work quickly, as the mixture hardens fast.

Allow brittle to cool in the pan. Break brittle into bite-size pieces with your hands. Store in airtight containers.

*\*Notes:* If you prefer, you can use dried fruit, such as raisins or cranberries, instead of nuts.

Also, the brittle can stick to the pan. If you like, line the pan with foil or waxed paper, rather than spraying with vegetable oil.

Total calories per serving: 261    Fat: 10 grams  
 Carbohydrates: 40 grams    Protein: 4 grams  
 Sodium: 26 milligrams    Fiber: 2 grams

## STRAWBERRY-RHUBARB COMPOTE WITH MATZO STREUSEL (Serves 8)

### COMPOTE

**1 1/4 cups sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)**  
**3 Tablespoons potato starch**  
**7 cups hulled and sliced fresh strawberries**  
**4 1/2 cups rhubarb stalks, sliced into 1/2-inch pieces**  
**2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice**  
**1 teaspoon finely grated fresh lemon zest**

Preheat oven to 425 degrees.

Stir together sugar and potato starch in a large bowl. Then, add in strawberries, rhubarb, lemon

juice, and zest. Transfer mixture to a shallow ungreased 3-quart baking dish.

### STREUSEL TOPPING

**1 1/4 cups matzo cake meal\***  
**2/3 cup packed light brown sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)**  
**1/4 cup potato starch**  
**1/2 teaspoon cinnamon**  
**Pinch of salt**  
**1/2 cup softened nonhydrogenated vegan margarine**

Make topping by first whisking together matzo cake meal, brown sugar, potato starch, cinnamon, and salt in a bowl. Blend in margarine until mixture forms into small clumps.

Crumble streusel evenly over the top of the compote and bake until fruit is bubbling and topping is golden, approximately 40 minutes. Serve warm or cool before serving.

*\*Notes:* If you can't find matzo cake meal, grind matzo in a food processor until it's the texture of flour.

If necessary, use unsweetened frozen strawberries and rhubarb. The compote will not be as firm if using frozen fruit.

Total calories per serving: 480    Fat: 12 grams  
 Carbohydrates: 93 grams    Protein: 4 grams  
 Sodium: 150 milligrams    Fiber: 5 grams



## MATZO CANDY

(Serves 16)

4 boards matzo

1 cup softened nonhydrogenated vegan margarine

¾ cup brown sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)

1½ cups vegan chocolate or carob chips, divided

1 cup chopped nuts (Almonds, pecans, or walnuts work well.)

Preheat oven to 450 degrees.

Line a large cookie sheet with sides or a large roasting pan with aluminum foil or parchment paper. Line the bottom of the pan with matzo. If you need to, break the matzo to fit so it completely covers the bottom.

Place margarine in a pot. Add brown sugar. Heat slowly, stirring, until the two are combined and the mixture bubbles for 1 minute. Pour over matzo to evenly cover. Place pan in oven for 2 minutes. Sprinkle 1 cup of chocolate chips over the matzo and return to the oven for 2 minutes or until chips are melted.

Remove from oven and spread chocolate with spatula. Sprinkle with nuts and remaining chocolate. Refrigerate or freeze until hard, approximately 15 minutes. Break into pieces and place in an airtight container. Freeze until ready to serve.

Total calories per serving: 257    Fat: 19 grams  
Carbohydrates: 22 grams    Protein: 3 grams  
Sodium: 123 milligrams    Fiber: 2 grams

## MATZO CREAM TART

(Serves 8-10)

### MATZO MEAL CRUST

1 cup matzo meal

⅓ cup sugar

½ cup nonhydrogenated vegan margarine, cut into pieces

¼ cup soft silken tofu

2-3 Tablespoons cold water

Preheat oven to 325 degrees.

Combine matzo meal, sugar, and margarine in a food processor until well mixed. Add tofu and water. Process until the dough forms a ball or the mixture is holding together.

Press dough into the bottom and sides of a 9-inch pie pan. Bake approximately 15-20 minutes, until crust is darker brown and feels firm. Remove from oven and allow crust to cool.

### FILLING

1 cup sugar

¼ cup potato starch

1 Tablespoon grated orange zest

¾ cup orange juice

¼ cup lemon juice

½ cup soft silken tofu

2 cups fresh or frozen thawed blueberries or raspberries

While crust is baking, combine sugar with potato starch in a small pot. Stir in zest, orange juice, and lemon juice. Turn heat on high and bring to fast boil. Remove from heat and whisk in tofu. Return to high heat and stir just until mixture bubbles. Set aside or refrigerate until just warm.

Spread warm filling in crust. Top with fruit. Serve warm, or allow tart to cool before serving.

Total calories per serving: 354    Fat: 12 grams  
Carbohydrates: 58 grams    Protein: 3 grams  
Sodium: 123 milligrams    Fiber: 1 gram

## SWEET STICKY RICE BALLS

(Makes 10-12 rice balls)

3 Tablespoons sugar

1 cup sticky rice flour\*

½ cup hot water

2 quarts water

In a medium-sized bowl, combine sugar and rice flour. Slowly pour in the hot water and knead into a smooth dough. If the dough sticks to your hand, add a bit more rice flour. If it is too dry, add a bit more hot water.

Add approximately 2 quarts of water to a large pot and bring to a bowl. While the water is coming to a boil, pinch off small amounts of dough and roll into balls. When water is boiling, add rice balls as if you were cooking pasta; add the rice balls with the water staying at a boil. Cook until the rice balls rise to the top. That means that the balls will be ready to remove from the water. You can use a slotted spoon to remove them or pour them into a colander.

The cooked rice balls can be served warm, with warmed coconut milk, or cooled and rolled in sesame seeds, chopped nuts, or cocoa powder.

*\*Notes:* If sticky rice flour is not available, grind sticky rice into a flour using a food processor.

Sticky rice is also called glutinous rice (but does not contain any gluten), sweet rice, or *gao nep* (Vietnamese). If Asian or other markets in your area do not carry it, you can easily purchase it online.

Total calories per rice ball: 59    Fat: <1 gram  
Carbohydrates: 14 grams    Protein: 1 gram  
Sodium: <1 milligram    Fiber: <1 gram

## STICKY RICE BALLS

(Makes 10-12 rice balls)

*Plan your timing for this recipe, as the rice needs to soak for at least*

four hours. This recipe is for a non-sweet rice ball. You can make it sweet by sprinkling some sugar into the cooking water. You can also finely mince dried fruit, nuts, coconut, or chocolate or carob and roll these into the rice balls.

**2 cups long-grain sticky rice\***  
**Water to cover rice**

Place the uncooked sticky rice into a medium bowl and add enough cold water to cover it by 2 inches. Leave it to soak for at least 4 hours. (Soaking overnight is fine.)

When you are ready to cook the rice, you can cook it in a pot or in a rice cooker. In a pot, you'll want approximately 4 inches of water. Bring the water to a boil, and then add rice, lower heat, and cover. Allow to steam for 20-30 minutes. To test if rice is done, you can carefully gather a small amount in your hand and pinch into a ball. If it sticks and is tender but chewy, it is done!

Turn the cooked sticky rice onto a clean surface, such as a cutting board, and spread it out into a 2-inch thick layer. Allow to cool for approximately 2-3 minutes so you can work with it. Pinch small amounts in your hand, and roll into balls. You can decorate the rice balls as you wish. Serve warm or cool.

*\*Note:* Sticky rice is also called glutinous rice (but does not contain any gluten), sweet rice, or *gao nep* (Vietnamese). If Asian or other markets in your area do not carry it, you can easily purchase it online.

Total calories per rice ball: 137 Fat: <1 gram  
Carbohydrates: 30 grams Protein: 3 grams  
Sodium: 3 milligrams Fiber: 1 gram

## SPRINGTIME CHOCOLATE EGGS

(Makes approximately 24 pieces)

**1 cup softened vegan cream cheese**  
**3 cups vegan powdered sugar\***  
**1½ cups melted, cooled chocolate or carob chips**  
**1½ teaspoons vanilla**  
**Chopped Matzo Candy (page 19), cocoa powder, chopped nuts, or shredded coconut for decoration**

Place the cream cheese in the bowl of an electric mixer. Beat until cream cheese is pliable and airy. This can be done with a fork, but it will take some time.

Gradually mix in sugar, beating until well combined. Add chocolate or carob and vanilla and mix until well combined.

Refrigerate for 1 hour or until stiff enough to shape. Roll into small balls, approximately 1 teaspoon, and coat with selected decoration. Place on parchment or waxed paper and refrigerate until ready to serve.

*\*Note:* If vegan powdered sugar is not available, granulated sugar can be processed in a food processor until powdered.

Total calories per piece: 124 Fat: 4 grams  
Carbohydrates: 23 grams Protein: 1 gram  
Sodium: 54 milligrams Fiber: 1 gram

## FAST CRISPED RICE EGGS

(Makes 8-10 small eggs)

**¼ cup vegan chocolate or carob chips**  
**2 cups puffed rice cereal**

Melt chocolate in a microwave or on the stove. Remove from heat, mix in cereal, and very quickly

form into shapes. Store on a parchment- or waxed paper-lined tray.

Total calories per small egg: 33 Fat: 1 gram  
Carbohydrates: 6 grams Protein: 1 gram  
Sodium: <1 milligram Fiber: <1 gram

## CARROT HALWAH

(Serves 6)

*A tasty dessert!*

**Vegetable oil spray**  
**2½ cups grated carrots**  
**1 cup rice, almond, or coconut milk**  
**½ cup sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)**  
**¼ cup orange juice concentrate**  
**¼ teaspoon ground cardamom\***  
**Approximately ¼ cup cashews for garnish**

Spray a large pot with vegetable oil and heat. Add carrots and sauté, stirring, for approximately 2 minutes, until carrots wilt. Add milk and cook over low heat until the carrots are very soft. Stir in sugar and juice concentrate. Cover, and allow to cook for approximately 15 minutes or until the mixture thickens.

Stir in cardamom and pour into a serving bowl. Garnish with cashews. This dish can be served warm or cold.

*\*Note:* If you don't care for cardamom, you can season with powdered or fresh ginger, vanilla extract, or cinnamon instead.

Total calories per serving: 155 Fat: 3 grams  
Carbohydrates: 31 grams Protein: 2 grams  
Sodium: 50 milligrams Fiber: 2 grams

**Nancy Berkoff is VRG's Food Service Advisor. She has written *Vegan Passover Recipes*, *Vegan Microwave Cookbook*, *Vegan Meals for 1 or 2*, and numerous other cookbooks.**

# Seasonal Meals

*With Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Available  
in Late Winter and Early Spring*

*By Peggy Rynk*

**A**LTHOUGH THE weather this time of year may be a bit unpredictable, a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables is still available. Some areas have farmers' markets that are open all year or almost all of the year. If there isn't one nearby, well-stocked supermarkets offer a generous variety of fresh produce. Look for seasonal produce you haven't tried before, and give it a go. You may come away with a few new favorites.

One of the greatest joys of cooking is inventing and trying new recipes with new combinations of foods. No, not everything you invent will work, nor should it. If it did, you wouldn't be stretching enough. So, go ahead—stretch! Along the way, as you have your own culinary adventures, you will discover many wonderful combinations. Just be sure to write down what you do as you go so you can duplicate the dish.

## NUTMEG APPLES

**(Serves 4 as a side dish or 6 as a topping for vegan cake or vegan ice cream)**

**2 Tablespoons nonhydrogenated vegan margarine**

**4 cups peeled, cored, and sliced tart apples, such as Granny Smith**

**1/3 cup sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)**

**1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg**

Melt the margarine in a 1½-quart saucepan. Add the apples and sauté, stirring often, until almost tender. Mix together the sugar and nutmeg, and stir into the apples. Continue cooking and stirring often until apples are tender.

Total calories per side dish: 167 Fat: 6 grams  
Carbohydrates: 31 grams Protein: <1 gram  
Sodium: 60 milligrams Fiber: 1 gram

## LIME BAKED PEARS

**(Serves 6)**

*If limes are unavailable, lemons work well, too.*

**Juice and grated zest of 2 fresh limes**

**6 cups cored, cubed, unpeeled firm pears**

**1/2 cup water**

**1/4 cup sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)**

**Vanilla vegan ice cream (optional)**

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

In an ungreased 8 x 8 x 2-inch baking pan, blend together all ingredients except the vegan ice cream. Bake for approximately

25-30 minutes or until pears are tender. Serve warm and top with the vegan ice cream, if desired.

Total calories per serving: 131 Fat: <1 gram  
Carbohydrates: 35 grams Protein: 1 gram  
Sodium: 2 milligrams Fiber: 5 grams

## CITRUS GINGER COMPOTE

**(Serves 4)**

*Refreshing and delicious, the ginger adds a little heat and a lot of flavor.*

**2 cups fresh grapefruit sections**

**2 cups fresh orange sections**

**1/3 cup diced crystallized ginger**

Gently stir grapefruit and orange sections to combine. Garnish with ginger.

Total calories per serving: 118 Fat: <1 gram  
Carbohydrates: 29 grams Protein: 1 gram  
Sodium: 8 milligrams Fiber: 3 grams

## CHILLED ORANGE SLICES

**(Serves 4)**

*This is an elegant, simple dessert with no added fat. Serve in crystal sherbet glasses, garnished with fresh mint, if desired.*

**1/4 cup sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)**

1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom  
 1/4 teaspoon orange extract  
 1 Tablespoon water  
 4 seedless oranges, peeled (including white pith removed) and sliced crosswise into 1/2-inch slices

In a 1-quart mixing bowl, blend together the sugar and cardamom. Stir in the orange extract and water. Gently fold in the orange slices just so all the slices are coated with the sugar mixture. Cover and chill thoroughly.

Total calories per serving: 111 Fat: <1 gram  
 Carbohydrates: 28 grams Protein: 1 gram  
 Sodium: <1 milligram Fiber: 3 grams

## DAIQUIRI CANTALOUPE WITH FRESH MINT

(Serves 8)

1/3 cup light rum  
 3 Tablespoons fresh lime juice  
 1/4 cup sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)  
 6 cups bite-sized cantaloupe cubes  
 1/3 cup fresh mint leaves, packed

In a medium-sized mixing bowl, stir together the rum, lime juice, and sugar until sugar is almost completely dissolved. Place cantaloupe cubes in a blender cup and blend until smooth. Add blended cantaloupe to other ingredients and stir. Cover and chill mixture well. Just before

-serving gently stir again, adding the mint. Serve over ice.

Total calories per serving: 89 Fat: <1 gram  
 Carbohydrates: 17 grams Protein: 1 gram  
 Sodium: 20 milligrams Fiber: 1 gram

## BLACK BEAN-BROWN RICE STIR-FRY WITH VEGETABLES

(Serves 4 as a main dish or 6 as a side dish)

*Here's an excellent way to use up leftover rice.*

1 Tablespoon canola oil  
 1/4 cup slivered fresh garlic  
 2/3 cup chopped yellow onions  
 2 cups diced fresh curly kale, rinsed well, stems removed  
 3/4 cup seeded unpeeled fresh tomatoes  
 One 15 1/4-ounce can black beans, undrained  
 3 cups cooked brown rice  
 1/2 cup water  
 Generous dash ground red chipotle  
 Salt to taste

In a 12-inch skillet, heat the oil. Add the garlic and onions and sauté until half tender. Stir in the kale and continue to stir-fry until it is about half tender.

Add the tomatoes, beans, rice, water, chipotle, and salt. Cook over medium heat, covered, and stir often until kale is tender and flavors have blended.

Total calories per main dish-sized serving: 337  
 Fat: 5 grams Carbohydrates: 62 grams  
 Protein: 12 grams Sodium: 441 milligrams  
 Fiber: 12 grams

## TWO-SQUASH SAUTÉ WITH GARLIC AND BASIL

(Serves approximately 8 as a side dish or over rice as a main dish)

*\*Pictured on the cover. This dish is beautiful and full of flavor. Once the chopping is done, it's an easy supper to prepare, too.*

2 Tablespoons canola oil  
 4 cups coarsely chopped zucchini  
 4 cups coarsely chopped yellow squash  
 3 cups diced yellow onions  
 1 1/2-2 Tablespoons slivered fresh garlic  
 One 14 1/2-ounce can diced tomatoes, undrained, no salt added  
 1 teaspoon dried sweet basil, coarsely crushed  
 1 teaspoon salt

Heat the oil in a 12-inch skillet. Add the zucchini, yellow squash, and onions. Sauté vegetables for approximately 10 minutes or until almost tender-crisp.

Blend in the garlic, tomatoes, basil, and salt. Cover and cook, stirring frequently, until vegetables are just tender.

Total calories per serving: 159 Fat: 4 grams  
 Carbohydrates: 30 grams Protein: 6 grams  
 Sodium: 344 milligrams Fiber: 7 grams



## CRUNCHY LENTIL SALAD

(Serves 4)

*A slightly different way to enjoy lentils, this salad has lots of crunch, flavor, and eye appeal.*

**1 cup lentils, picked over, rinsed, and drained**  
**2½ cups water**  
**1 teaspoon salt**  
**2 cloves garlic, crushed**  
**⅔ cup finely chopped carrots**  
**½ cup finely chopped celery**  
**¼ cup finely chopped red onions**  
**3 Tablespoons minced fresh parsley**  
**2 Tablespoons lemon juice**  
**2 Tablespoons canola oil**  
**¼ teaspoon salt or to taste**  
**⅛ teaspoon black pepper**  
**Dash cayenne**

Cook the lentils in the water until almost tender. Add the salt and continue to cook, covered, stirring occasionally, until tender. Drain. Cool slightly; then, stir in the garlic, carrots, celery, red onions, and parsley.

In a small bowl, whisk together the remaining ingredients. Pour over lentil mixture and toss well. Cover and chill thoroughly. (Overnight is fine.) Serve over salad greens, if desired.

Total calories per serving: 249    Fat: 7 grams  
Carbohydrates: 33 grams    Protein: 13 grams  
Sodium: 758 milligrams    Fiber: 16 grams

## BROCCOLI-TOMATO-RICE SKILLET

(Serves 4 as a main dish or 8 as a side dish)

*The colors, textures, and flavors of this dish complement each other well.*

**1½ Tablespoons garlic-flavored olive oil**  
**3½ cups broccoli florets and sliced stems cut into bite-sized pieces**  
**1 cup diced yellow onions**  
**1½ cups unpeeled, diced tomatoes**  
**2½ Tablespoons slivered fresh garlic**  
**½ teaspoon salt**  
**Freshly ground black pepper to taste**  
**3 cups cooked rice**  
**Approximately ¼ cup water**

Heat the oil in a 12-inch skillet. Add the broccoli and sauté for approximately 10 minutes or until it just begins to soften a bit.

Add the onions and continue to sauté another 3 minutes or so until onions, too, begin to soften a bit. Stir in the tomatoes and garlic. Continue cooking, stirring often, until broccoli is almost tender-crisp.

Blend in the salt, pepper, cooked rice, and water, a Tablespoon or two at a time, as needed to keep mixture from sticking.

Cook, stirring frequently, until broccoli is tender-crisp and rice is hot.

Total calories per main-dish serving: 271  
Fat: 7 grams    Carbohydrates: 47 grams  
Protein: 7 grams    Sodium: 330 milligrams  
Fiber: 6 grams

## CAULIFLOWER WITH ONIONS, GREEN PEAS, AND SEASONINGS

(Serves 6 as a side dish on its own or 6 as a main dish with the rice)

*This dish is a beautiful blend of colors, flavors, and textures.*

**2 Tablespoons canola oil**  
**5 cups bite-sized cauliflower florets**  
**Water as needed**  
**1 cup diced yellow onions**  
**2 Tablespoons slivered garlic**  
**¼ teaspoon cayenne**  
**1 teaspoon turmeric powder**  
**1 teaspoon salt**  
**2 cups frozen green peas**

Heat the oil in a 12-inch skillet. Add the cauliflower and sauté until about half-tender, adding water a Tablespoon at a time as needed.

Add the onions and garlic and continue to sauté until onions are almost tender.

While the vegetables cook, blend together in a small bowl the cayenne, turmeric, and salt. Sprinkle over the cauliflower mixture and stir to blend.

When the cauliflower is almost tender, stir in the peas and cover. Continue to cook, adding a little water as needed, until cauliflower and peas are both done. Serve over hot basmati or other rice, if desired.

Total calories per serving: 113    Fat: 5 grams  
Carbohydrates: 15 grams    Protein: 5 grams  
Sodium: 468 milligrams    Fiber: 5 grams

**Peggy Rynk is a frequent contributor to *Vegetarian Journal*.**





# NUTRITION HOTLINE

(Continued from page 2)

You could even grow your own vegetables or get fresh vegetables from a farm or farmer's market. You may find that you don't hate vegetables after all.

**QUESTION:** "I just discovered that some potatoes I had bought had greenish skin. Is this a problem?"  
P.A., via e-mail

**ANSWER:** The potato's greenish skin is due to chlorophyll, a harmless chemical produced when a potato is exposed to light, either because it was not covered with dirt when it was growing or because of post-harvest light exposure. Other factors that cause chlorophyll to form include stress (insects, mechanical injury, heat, etc.). Chlorophyll is not toxic but is often a marker for high levels of another substance, solanine, which can be toxic. Solanine forms under the same conditions that

promote chlorophyll formation. Although solanine poisoning due to potatoes has not been reported in the United States in many years, it can occur if green potatoes are eaten. In fact, if you ate as little as a cup of mashed potatoes made from potatoes with the highest amount of solanine ever seen in a potato, you could get sick. Symptoms of solanine poisoning, which generally occur 8 to 12 hours after eating green potatoes, include headaches, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and even neurological problems such as dizziness, hallucinations, and confusion. Usually symptoms go away after two to three days. However, a very high dose of solanine can be fatal.

Since solanine concentration is highest in a potato's skin, many experts suggest that peeling a green potato deep enough to remove any green layer should eliminate most of the solanine. Of course, to be completely safe, you can simply discard potatoes with green skin. Solanine gives potatoes a bitter taste, another indication that it's safest to toss potatoes that taste bitter or return them to the store. Cooking is not a solution; solanine is not inactivated by boiling or microwaving potatoes.

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## ALTERNATIVES TO MEAT FOR A TYPICAL CAMP MENU

These are easy items that the 'grubmaster' can take for the vegans who are camping with meat-eaters.

### LUNCHES

**Monday:** Lightlife bologna slices for deli sandwiches (often in the produce section)

**Tuesday:** Lightlife veggie hot dogs

**Wednesday:** Hummus instead of grilled cheese

**Thursday:** Instead of chicken nuggets, leftover veggie hot dogs or peanut butter and jelly sandwiches

**Friday:** Instead of fish sticks, pasta and a meatless tomato sauce

### DINNERS

**Sunday:** Yves veggie pepperoni with plain spaghetti made separately (There are Nate's vegetarian meatballs, but this brand may be harder to find for typical camp planners.)

**Monday and Tuesday:** Lightlife Smart Ground

**Wednesday:** Morningstar Farms Vegan Grillers (Morningstar is owned by Kellogg's, and the brand is found in many stores.)

**Thursday:** Vegetarian chili

**Friday:** Instead of chicken, veggie jerky or cans of Indian *chana masala* (such as Jyoti) if the parties are adventurous.

**\*Note:** We don't necessarily think vegetarians should always eat this many meat substitutes, but these are easy alternatives when the rest of the meat-based menu is being prepared this way.



## Earth Balance Introduces A Buttery Soy-Free Spread

Whether you're gluten-intolerant or simply looking for a vegan spread that does not contain soy, you'll want to give Earth Balance's Soy-Free Spread a try.



The spread is made with a blend of palm fruit, canola, safflower, and olive oils and contains no trans fats. Use this delicious alternative for breads, vegetables, or any other food on which you would use butter.

To learn more, contact Earth Balance at 7102 LaVista Place, Suite 200, Longmont, CO 80503, or call the company at (201) 568-9300. You can also visit their website at <[www.earthbalancenatural.com](http://www.earthbalancenatural.com)>.

## Seeing the Bigger Picture

Author and former VRG staffer Davida Gypsy Breier has started Wild Leek Photography, a project specializing in portraits of sanctuary, rescued, wild, and companion animals. Vegetarian and animal organizations are welcome to use these photos, taken in cruelty-free environments. In addition, prints of all photos are available for purchase. Whenever a print is sold, the sanctuary where the photo was taken receives a donation.

To view Davida's portfolio, go to <[www.wildleekphotography.com](http://www.wildleekphotography.com)>. You can also contact Davida at P.O. Box 11064, Baltimore, MD 21212, or via phone at (443) 528-5340.

## Short on Time?



Amy's Hot Breakfast Cereals are delicious, microwavable, and vegan! They're also ready to eat in under five minutes. With Cream of Rice, Rolled Oats, Steel-Cut Oats, and Multi-Grain varieties, there is definitely a texture and taste for every palate. If you like a mild breakfast cereal, the Cream of Rice and Rolled Oats are delicately sweet and hearty choices. In contrast, Steel-Cut Oats and Multi-Grain have a bolder taste, with the Steel-Cut Oats having a creamier texture and more pronounced sweetness. All are a great start to your day, satisfying many tastes and appetites!

To learn more, write to Amy's Kitchen, Inc., at P.O. Box 449, Petaluma, CA 94953, or call (707) 578-7270. Information is also available on their website at <[www.amys.com](http://www.amys.com)>. *Written by Alison Farrell, VRG Intern.*

## How About Snacking on Some Crunchy... Bananas?

Funky Monkey Snacks now offers a healthy alternative to help you beat the midday junk food binge. These satisfying, freeze-dried fruit snacks come in four tasty varieties: Bananamon, which sprinkles organic bananas with organic cinnamon; Carnaval Mix, containing organic banana and organic pineapple chunks as well as conventional apple, papaya, and raisins; Jivealime, which has organic pineapple with a touch of organic lime juice; and Purple Funk, made from organic bananas with organic acai.

All of the Funky Monkey snacks are the way that nature intended them—gluten-free and without added sugar, preservatives, colorings, or flavorings. For more information on these products, write to Funky Monkey Snacks at 11650 Olio Road, Suite 1000, Fishers, IN 46037, or visit <[www.funkymonkeysnacks.com](http://www.funkymonkeysnacks.com)>. *Written by Kristen Lambert, VRG Intern.*



## Raw Cuisine Delivered Directly to Your Door

If you are often too busy to prepare a healthy meal, you should look into the services that Pure Market Express provide. Just place your order online, and they will deliver a fresh raw meal directly to your home. All of their products are vegan and made without refined sugar or preservatives. Also, the company has many offerings, such as breakfasts, dinners, desserts, smoothies, and snacks made with primarily organic ingredients.

The VRG staff tried several products and enjoyed each one very much. The Pad Thai, which looked like noodles, was actually made from zucchini and was crisp and novel. The tasty fake 'bacon' in the Jalapeño Poppers was surprisingly made from eggplant. Also, their Chocolate Cheesecake and Banana Cream Pie were just amazing! I could not believe that the pie, which was quite sweet, was made without sugar or maple syrup.

Good food has gentle flavors and creates a natural harmony, though each ingredient keeps its original flavor. These dishes will remind you of what food is supposed to be. Check out Pure Market Express' website at <[www.puremarketexpress.com](http://www.puremarketexpress.com)> and be sure to try their products. *Written by Yuko Tamura, VRG Intern.*

## Perfect for Valentine's Day!



Looking for an environmentally conscious alternative to flowers, cards, or a huge box of chocolates? Soy Spacasso's Element Mist Massage Oil fits the bill. The 'Wind' fragrance is gender-neutral and relaxation-inducing. 'Earth' has the light scent of sandalwood, while 'Fire' exudes the essence of cinnamon. Enriched with soya, shea, and essential oils, each formula is quick absorbing, yet a perfect medium for giving a romantic massage. These moisturizing body fragrances leave your skin moisturized without feeling oily or greasy—and as an earth-friendly product, it doesn't leave any 'residue' on your conscience, either!

Contact Soy Spacasso at 2814 High Street, Des Moines, IA 50312, or via phone at (877) 493-6891. You may purchase these oils for \$8.00 from <[www.spacasso.com](http://www.spacasso.com)>. *Written by Alison Farrell, VRG Intern.*

## Vitamin D From Mushrooms

We usually think of vitamin D as coming from fortified soymilk or cow's milk or from sunlight exposure. However, there's a new source—mushrooms! When mushrooms are exposed to a special light, they produce vitamin D. Mushrooms that have been treated this way have 100 percent of the recommended intake of vitamin D in four or five mushrooms. The process does not use additives, supplements, or chemicals. Furthermore, the mushrooms do not look or taste different from typical untreated mushrooms.

Vitamin D Enriched Mushrooms™ have been developed by Monterey Mushrooms and are carried by many supermarkets. For more information, you can write to Monterey Mushrooms, Inc., at 260 Westgate Drive, Watsonville, CA 95076, or call the company at (800) 333-6874. Visit their website at <[www.montereymushrooms.com](http://www.montereymushrooms.com)>. *Written by Reed Mangels, PhD, RD.*

## Kudos to the USDA!

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has recently unveiled its new, colorful, one-page handout called *Ten Tips for Vegetarians*. Pointers on this handout include "Bone up on sources of calcium," "Nuts make great snacks," and "Choose fats wisely." The handout is highly positive and supportive of vegetarian diets. Download your own copy at <[www.mypyramid.gov/downloads/TenTips/VegetarianTipsheet.pdf](http://www.mypyramid.gov/downloads/TenTips/VegetarianTipsheet.pdf)>.

## Fresh Indian Flavor Without the Fuss

If you love Indian food but don't have the time or the talent to make those mouth-watering sauces from scratch, you don't have to miss out on home-cooked curry. Maya Kaimal produces a line of all-natural simmer sauces that can bring Indian flavor into any dish. The sauces are preservative-free and refrigerated, maintaining that fresh-from-the-kitchen taste.

Vegetarian Resource Group staff members taste-tested the Tamarind Curry and the Coconut Curry, both of which are vegan. Preparation was easy; we just simmered the sauces with vegetables and served with rice for a filling, delicious meal. The staff split on which sauce was better, but both were well-enjoyed.

For more information on Maya Kaimal Fine Indian Foods, call (845) 876-8200, visit their website at <[www.mayakaimal.com/index.html](http://www.mayakaimal.com/index.html)>, or write to Maya Kaimal Fine Indian Foods, P.O. Box 700, Rhinebeck, NY 12572. *Written by Rachael Prokop, VRG Intern.*



## Newman's Own Organics: The Second Generation

This title might seem like a parody to a science fiction television series, but I assure you that it's all science and no fiction. The science of Newman's Own Organics is that of chocolate making, and with attractive new packaging to showcase richer, USDA-certified organic vegan chocolate bars, you would be well-advised to try these confections. The flavors for the new bars, with their decadent levels of cocoa, include Dark (54 percent), Espresso Dark (54 percent), Orange Dark (54 percent), Super Dark (70 percent), and more. So, the next time you need to get a cocoa craving under control, remember that Newman's Own Organics has a delicious, newly revamped chocolate line, and proceeds from their sales contribute to great charitable causes.

Write to Newman's Own Organics, at P.O. Box 2098, Aptos, CA 95001, or contact them through their website at <[www.newmansownorganics.com](http://www.newmansownorganics.com)>.

*Written by Kristen Lambert, VRG Intern.*



# “My VRG Internship”

## Two Interns Relate Their Experiences

### Erin Smith

During my six-week, long-distance internship with The Vegetarian Resource Group, I was able to take advantage of some valuable opportunities. I was able to write a “Vegetarian Action” article and “Veggie Bits” for the *Vegetarian Journal*, write informative pieces for the VRG website to help other vegetarian teens, and add to VRG’s guide to veg-friendly restaurants. All of these assignments helped me grow and learn. As I worked for VRG, I saw my writing improve and my confidence skyrocket. While I used to be timid about talking on the phone, I can now confidently call up a business and ask them questions. I also learned about time management and how to work and communicate effectively with different people. All of this will be very helpful to me as I continue through high school and on to college in the future.

*Erin Smith was a long-distance high school intern with The Vegetarian Resource Group. Internships are unpaid. If you would like to intern with The VRG either in Baltimore or long-distance, please send to <vrg@vrg.org> a résumé if available, writing samples, and a letter indicating the dates you want to do the internship, time available, year in school if still in school, skills, experience, interests, what you want to learn from the internship, future goals, and vegetarian knowledge.*

### Kristen Lambert

When I first boarded the plane traveling from Salt Lake City to Baltimore, my stomach was upset with a mixture of anxiety and excitement. Earlier that year, I was offered an internship with The Vegetarian Resource Group, which I happily accepted, and I was now beginning my multi-month journey.

Previously in my life, I had never traveled further east from Utah than Colorado, especially not alone, so this was a big step in the direction of personal independence.

The plane ride, compared to a Greyhound bus ride, was over in no time, and before I knew it, I was at the

Baltimore airport being greeted by Jeannie McStay and Charles Stahler of The VRG. The car ride to what would be deemed ‘home’ for the next two-and-a-half months was filled with fun and interesting facts about Baltimore’s history. Since starting my internship, one thing has remained constant the entire time: people I have met since being here always seem to go out of their way to make me feel comfortable and accepted. If it were not for my colleagues at The VRG, who I now consider friends, I would have slipped into a self-pitying black hole of loneliness.

My first week working entailed a tour of the office (I did not expect the extensive library.), an introduction to a few of the people responsible for a smooth-running organization, and a crash course on what happens behind the scenes of The VRG, which includes what I would then be responsible for.

Major projects for my internship:

- **Write a FAQ for the upcoming teen section of The VRG’s website.** I had some trouble with this. The question I originally chose to answer was very broad and did not apply to personal experience I had. After consulting with Charles and Reed Mangels, I decided to go in a different direction. Here is the question I answered:

**“There is a small local restaurant that offers vegetarian options that no one knows about. What can I do to let people know?”**

- **Write a “Vegetarian Action” piece that will be featured in an issue of the *Vegetarian Journal*.** I chose someone close to home to write about; Kelly Green is the founder of the vegan bakery ‘Cakewalk’ in Salt Lake City, Utah. She was extremely helpful to me during our interview and even provided some samples (vegan cupcakes and vegan Twinkies called ‘dillos’) that my family was more than happy to devour. It is hard to describe the way I felt when Debra showed me the format my article would have and how it would look in the *Journal*. Proud? Yes. (See page 35.)

- **The 2009 survey on vegetarianism.** “Nothing is ever as easy as it seems” would be my choice phrase for describing this project. I was required to learn how to use a mail-merge program and to make numerous phone calls regarding surveys. What I learned from this task is that organization can be my best friend, and math can be my worst. The importance of teamwork and keeping others informed also prevailed, although maybe not so much at first. I would not have accomplished anything without the guidance of the computer master, i.e., John Cunningham.
- **The Book Expo America.** Attending The Book Expo America was a great way to experience New York for the first time. The first day, I helped to carry supplies and set up our booth in preparation for the event the next day. Debra suggested that we see the city while we still had energy and were up for the walk, which meant before the Expo began. So that night I toured New York with my native guide (Debra), and the tour even included a restaurant stop in Chinatown for, you guessed it, Chinese food! The next few days would be filled with manning our booth, networking, and collecting books. I was introduced to an array of people who were in some way affiliated with The VRG, and I handed out issues of *Vegetarian Journal* to passersby. Occasionally, I would talk to someone interested in The VRG and refer them back to Charles or Debra. It seemed like “Oh, my [insert female relative noun] is a vegetarian/vegan” was stated frequently from people picking up the *Journal*. There were also people who felt the need to justify why they still ate meat after being offered the literature, which I still don’t completely understand. By the end of the Expo, I was exhausted from all of

the work and socializing, so I slept and snored on the car ride back to Baltimore.

The rest of my internship time was filled with less ‘major’ projects but still important ones. These assignments included:

- **Helping with restaurant listings.** I’ve never wanted Thai food more in my life than after doing this.
- **Clerical work** (like packaging books to be shipped out). Jeannie is a pro at packing boxes; my tape never laid as flat as hers.
- **Learning HTML**, all thanks to Heather’s help.
- **Writing, editing, and sending press releases.** This would not have worked out so well if it weren’t for Rachael, the other intern.

My overall experience interning at The Vegetarian Resource Group has been a very rewarding one; I am going back to Utah having gained knowledge and friends. I think when it comes to working for a non-profit, you really have to love what you are doing, and I loved interning here. Thanks to everyone involved in making this encounter possible, and positive.

— July 2009

*Kristen Lambert was a VRG intern and recipient of the Eleanor Wolff Scholarship. If you would like to apply for a VRG internship in Baltimore or to do a long-distance internship, please send a résumé, writing sample, and cover letter detailing your interests, skills, goals, and vegetarian knowledge to The Vegetarian Resource Group, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203, or e-mail to [vrg@vrg.org](mailto:vrg@vrg.org). Most internships are not paid. If you are looking for a paid internship, please indicate your financial need.*

## Bequests

VRG depends on the generous contributions of our members and supporters to continue our educational projects. Though the world may not become vegetarian in our lifetimes, we realize that we are planning and working for future generations.

- Your will and life insurance policies enable you to protect your family and also to provide a way to give long-lasting support to causes in which you believe. Naming The Vegetarian Resource Group in your will or life insurance policy will enable us to increase our work for vegetarianism.
- One suggested form of bequest is: *I give and bequeath to The Vegetarian Resource Group, Baltimore, Maryland, the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ dollars (or if stock, property, or insurance policy, please describe).*
- To be sure your wishes are carried out, please speak with your attorney specifically about writing the correct information in your will.

# Essay Contest Winners

## THE PRICE OF DINNER

By Yueyue Guo, 18 yrs  
Rhode Island



**I**T WAS THE SMELL THAT GOT to me first. It was my first trip to a Chinatown at age eight, and I was standing right in front of the seafood counter, waiting for my mother to buy the fish that she would turn into a delicious dinner dish later that night. The stench that emanated from the whole seafood area was a combination of the wet, muddy tile floors, seawater, and—I realized later—blood and guts.

My mother had been waiting a good 20 minutes before finally arriving at the front of the line; the place was packed with people buying anything from lobsters to sharks. I saw my mother peeking through the large grimy fish tanks and pointing to a fish crowded towards the middle of the tank. The man behind the counter, who wore a thick plastic apron smeared with dried blood that covered him from shoulder to mid-calf and heavy boots on his feet, took a basketball-sized net and ladled out a fish my mother had scouted out. He reached into the net and grabbed the writhing fish by the tail and, in one swift motion, raised his hand high above

**“I kept replaying the sequences of the poor creature’s execution. I asked my mom, ‘Why did that man have to kill the fish like that?’”**

his head and then slammed it down, letting go of the fish just before his arm reached his side. I stood horrified, unable to comprehend what had just happened. The man then took a large mallet and bent forward, giving the fish a few blows that effectively crushed whatever life was left after the violent throwdown.

When my mother carried the plastic bag holding the fish back to the cart, I no longer thought of the scrumptious flavor of the fish that would fill my mouth in a few hours. Instead, I kept replaying the sequences of the poor creature’s execution. I asked my mom, “Why

did that man have to kill the fish like that?” “And how could you buy something that you just watched being killed?” Recognizing the fear and confusion in my eyes, my mother smiled faintly and said, “Don’t worry, fish don’t have feelings, so that fish didn’t feel any fear and it didn’t hurt at all. And now we have a fresh fish for dinner; only a fish right out of the sea can beat that ...”

On the ride back to my house, I barely spoke. I tried to imagine how it would feel if someone took me up high in the air, slammed me down to break my back, then pounded me with a mallet to finish me off. I was terrified of the image. That was when I decided that

**“I’m satisfied eating my tofu and beans because I know, by not eating any meat, I can spare a few animals of the same fate that I had witnessed on that fateful day.”**

I could not simply allow this to happen. That night at dinner, when my mother reached over to my plate to pass me some fish, I said no. My sister had given me a puzzled look and managed a “What?” while my father demanded, “Why not? This is absolutely amazing, and so good for you, especially since you’re growing right now.” I explained that I could not bear to have animals so brutally killed just so I can have a tasty dinner.

In the days after, I eventually stopped eating all kinds of meat, as I learned about the processes by which animals were raised and slaughtered. Each time, I imagined myself in the animal’s situation—whether it was having my bill cut or tail snipped, pumped with antibiotics and hormones, or stuffed into cages barely big enough for me to fit. All I knew was that I would never want to live such a life of misery and end with a trip to the slaughterhouse.

Every once in a while, my mother would ask me if I wanted any of the pork roast or shrimp she had cooked. I can smell the aromas, but I always say no. I’m satisfied eating my tofu and beans because I know, by not eating any meat, I can spare a few animals the same fate that I had witnessed on that fateful day.

## THE STORYTELLER

By Nicole Sands, 15 yrs  
New York



### MY GRANDMOTHER

Rita is quite a storyteller. Her stories start with her hardworking grandparents, emigrating from Russia in the early 1900s, settling in a small village high in the Catskill Mountains called Tannersville. The origin of the name was derived from the tanning factory located on Main Street, where most of the townspeople worked. Due to the area being rural, animals were in abundance and trappers were able to turn in the pelts of rabbits, raccoons, and beavers they killed to be treated and stretched.

My Great, Great Grandpa Joe's mission was to provide a home and food for his growing family. His first job was a peddler selling small miscellaneous items to people living in the surrounding villages and towns. Many of his customers were farmers, and along with improving his knowledge of the English language, he saw farming as an opportunity to improve his family's lifestyle.

In order to embark on farming, more money was needed to purchase land and build a house and a barn. With the help of his eldest son, Louie, they became entrepreneurs by becoming animal trappers, killing, skinning, and tanning the pelts themselves and then selling them directly to fur traders in New York City. Being Jewish Orthodox, the meat of the animals was given away to other families because they were not allowed to eat it.

By the 1920s, hotels were cropping up all over the Catskills to accommodate city dwellers who wanted to escape New York City during the hot summer months. By that time, Great, Great Grandpa Joe provided those hotels with chickens and eggs, since he now had the land, the house, and a barn with plenty of space to raise hundreds of chickens. The chickens were kept

behind fences high enough to prevent them from flying out and allowed to walk freely around the ground. You might say they were "free range."

Grandma Rita also relates that, in the 1940s, when she and her cousins were young, they were given the job of finding the eggs laid by the hens and feeding the chickens. Every Thursday, the chickens that were plump enough were caught and packed into wooded crates for shipping to various hotels and butcher shops. The kids would run after the chickens with a metal pole that had a hook and then grab the chicken by the leg and cram it into a crate. The crates were then piled one on top of the other on the back of a panel truck with no ventilation. The chickens awaited their execution, having their necks slit and held upside down allowing the blood to run out so they would be kosher!

**"The chickens were kept behind fences high enough to prevent them from flying out and allowed to walk freely around the ground. You might say they were 'free range.'"**

Some of the hotels wanted the chickens delivered alive; others wanted them killed and feathers plucked. Thinking about it now, my grandma realizes how cruel the whole process was, whereas at the time the kids thought, "This was fun!" and made a game of it.

I realize killing animals is no game and that is why I have become a vegetarian with aspirations of one day becoming a veterinarian to help animals, not harm them!

I'm reminded of my grandma's stories every time I pass a butcher shop or see people wearing fur coats! We are in a day and age where we no longer have to be barbarians; there are so many non-animal food sources and so many other things you can wear besides a dead animal on your back!

That is why it is good to have a storyteller in the family—so that new stories may be told!

## ANNUAL ESSAY CONTEST RULES

To enter VRG's annual essay contest, just write a 2-3 page essay on any aspect of vegetarianism or veganism. There are three entry categories: ages 14-18, ages 9-13, and age 8 and younger. Winners will each receive a \$50 savings bond.

All entries must be postmarked by May 1, 2010, for this year's contest. Entrants should base their entries on interviews, personal experience, research, and/or personal opinion. You need not be vegetarian to enter. All essays become property of The Vegetarian Resource Group. Only winners will be notified.

Send entries to: The Vegetarian Resource Group, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203  
Please make sure to include your name, age, address, phone number, school, and teacher's name.

# reviews

## THAT'S WHY WE DON'T EAT ANIMALS

By Ruby Roth



*That's Why We Don't Eat Animals* is a children's book covering the topic of factory farming. Its target audience is 6- to 10-year-olds, vegetarian or not. Roth gently discusses what is wrong with the way we raise food. First, she describes each animal in its natural habitat. Then, she compares this to their life on factory farms. She explains how chickens, turkeys, quail, ducks, and geese are raised. Next, she moves on to pigs, cows, and fish. Finally, Roth takes a look at animals in rainforests and endangered species. If each parent read this book to their child, I'm certain more children would consider becoming vegetarian.

*That's Why We Don't Eat Animals* (ISBN 978-1-55643-785-4) is published by North Atlantic Books. The book retails for \$16.95. Purchase this book online or call (410) 366-VEGE to order it from The VRG. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.

## THE ALL-NEW ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO GARDENING

Edited by Fern Marshall Bradley and Trevor Cole



As a child, I don't think I would have ever imagined *Reader's Digest* publishing their *Guide to Gardening* in an all-organic fashion. But they have, and this 576-page volume is incredible. You'll find 2,500 color photos and information on more

than 700 plants that can be grown organically.

I especially found the section titled "Taking Care of Your Garden" quite useful. Here you will find tips for improving soil quality and composting. You'll also learn about plant disorders. This part of the book includes illustrations of plant leaves with visible problems and offers suggestions on how to remedy the situation. Information on organic pest and disease control is shared, as well as a chart showing insects that help fight unwanted pests.

*The All-New Illustrated Guide to Gardening* (ISBN 978-0-7621-0999-9) is published by Reader's Digest and retails for \$35. Order this book online or locate it in a bookstore. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.

## THE VEGAN MONOLOGUES

By Ben Shaberman



*The Vegan Monologues* is a highly entertaining work from longtime vegan Ben Shaberman. In particular, this unique collection offers a few dozen essays, some previously published and some not, that tackle everything from rescuing stray animals to eating vegan Chinese food to attending Pink Floyd concerts.

Part One gives readers an insightful peek into the meat-free psyche with short, humorous pieces such as "How I Became a Takeout Junkie," "Making Nice with Vegetarians: An Insider's Guide," and "Vegetarian Guys Get the Girls." It also includes more serious pieces, like "How

We Said Goodbye" about Ben's loving tribute to his girlfriend's rapidly declining cat.

Part Two isn't focused on vegetarianism so much as other issues on the mind of this particular vegan, and many of his thoughts have a humorous bent. Among the most memorable are "The Further Adventures of Eczema Boy," "I Don't Want My MTV," and "My Beauty and Her Beast" about Ben mowing his girlfriend's colossal lawn.

*The Vegan Monologues* is a humorous, and at times touching, volume that both herbivores and omnivores will definitely savor.

*Vegan Monologues* (ISBN 978-1-934074-36-7) is published by Apprentice House and is 115 pages. You can order this book for \$16 (includes postage) from The VRG at P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203. Reviewed by Keryl Cryer.

## LICK IT!

By Cathe Olson



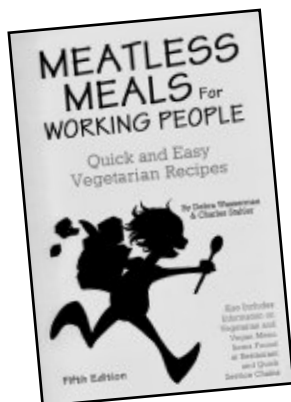
*Lick It!* offers more than 225 recipes for dairy-free frozen desserts that you can prepare at home using an ice cream maker. Enjoy making gourmet vegan ice creams, fruity sherbets and sorbets, frozen yogurts, sundaes, cakes, shakes, floats, and more. Your family and friends will love sampling Double Nut-Maple Ice Cream, Lemon Cheese Cake Ice Cream, and Strawberry Lemonade Sorbet topped with one of the many sauces and toppings.

*Lick It!* (ISBN 0-978-1-57067-237-8) is published by Book Publishing Company and retails for \$14.95. Order this book online or purchase it in your local bookstore. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.

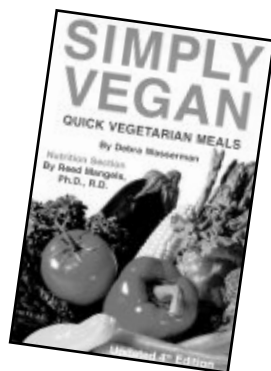


# VRG Catalog

## Books



**Meatless Meals for Working People—Quick and Easy Vegetarian Recipes** (\$12) by Debra Wasserman. We recommend using whole grains and fresh vegetables. However, for the busy working person, this isn't always possible. This 192-page book contains over 100 fast and easy recipes and tells you how to be a vegetarian within your hectic schedule using common, convenient foods. Spice chart, low-cost meal plans, party ideas, information on fast food restaurants, soy dishes, and more. Over 100,000 copies in print.



**Simply Vegan** (\$14.95) by Debra Wasserman and Reed Mangels, PhD, RD. These 224 pages contain over 160 quick and easy vegan recipes, a complete vegan nutrition section, and a list of where to mail order vegan food, clothing, cosmetics, and household products. Vegan menus and meal plans. Over 90,000 copies sold.

**Conveniently Vegan** (\$15) by Debra Wasserman. Prepare meals with all the natural foods products found in stores today, including soymilk, tempeh, tofu, veggie hot dogs, ... You'll find 150 recipes using convenience foods (including canned beans) along with grains, fresh fruits, and vegetables. Menu ideas, product sources, and food definitions included. (208 pp.)



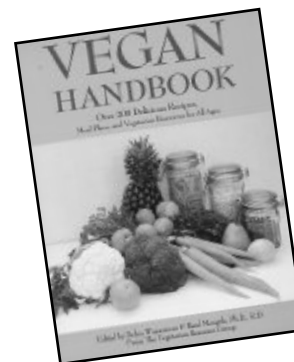
**Vegan Meals for One or Two—Your Own Personal Recipes** (\$15) by Nancy Berkoff, RD. Whether you live alone, are a couple, or are the only one in your household who is vegetarian, this 216-page book is for you. Each recipe is written to serve one or two people and is designed so that you can realistically use ingredients the way they come packaged from the store. Information on meal planning and shopping is included, as well as breakfast ideas, one-pot wonders, recipes that can be frozen for later use, grab-and-go suggestions, everyday and special occasion entrées, plus desserts and snacks. A glossary is also provided.

**Vegan in Volume** (\$20) by Nancy Berkoff, RD. This 272-page quantity cookbook is loaded with terrific recipes serving 25. Suitable for catered events, college food services, restaurants, parties in your own home, weddings, and much more.

**No Cholesterol Passover Recipes** (\$9) by Debra Wasserman. Includes 100 eggless and dairyless recipes. Seder plate ideas. (96 pp.)

**The Lowfat Jewish Vegetarian Cookbook—Healthy Traditions From Around the World** (\$15) by Debra Wasserman. Over 150 lowfat international vegan recipes with nutritional breakdowns, including Romanian Apricot Dumplings, Pumpernickel Bread, Russian Flat Bread, Potato Knishes, North African Barley Pudding, and much more. Menu suggestions and holiday recipes. (224 pp.)

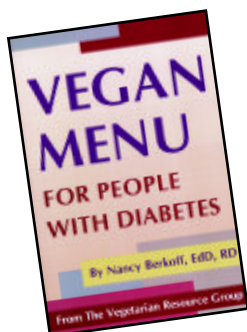
**Vegan Passover Recipes** (\$6) by Chef Nancy Berkoff, RD. This 48-page booklet features vegan soups and salads, side dishes and sauces, entrées, desserts, and dishes you can prepare in a microwave during Passover. All the recipes follow Ashkenazi Jewish traditions and are pareve.



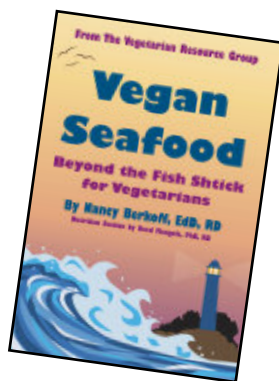
**Vegan Handbook** (\$20) edited by Debra Wasserman and Reed Mangels, PhD, RD. Over 200 vegan recipes and vegetarian resources. Includes sports nutrition, seniors' guide, feeding vegan children, recipes for egg-free cakes and vegan pancakes, Thanksgiving ideas, vegetarian history, menus, and more. (256 pp.)

**Vegan Microwave Cookbook** (\$16.95) by Chef Nancy Berkoff, RD. This 288-page cookbook contains 165 recipes, some of which take less than 10 minutes to cook. It also includes information for converting traditional recipes to the microwave, microwave baking and desserts, making breakfasts in a snap, and suggestions and recipes for holidays and parties.

*Vegetarian Journal's Guide to Natural Foods Restaurants in the U.S. and Canada* (\$18). Whether you're traveling on business or planning a much-needed vacation, this book is certain to make your dining experiences better. This fourth edition lists more than 2,200 restaurants, vacation spots, and local vegetarian groups to contact for more info about dining in their areas. (448 pp.)



*Vegan Menu for People with Diabetes* (\$10) by Nancy Berkoff, EdD, RD. This 96-page book gives people with (or at risk for) diabetes a four-week meal plan, exchange listings for meat substitutes and soy products, and recipes for enjoyable dishes, such as Creamy Carrot Soup, Tangy Tofu Salad, Baked Bean Quesadillas, and French Toast.



*Vegan Seafood: Beyond the Fish Shtick for Vegetarians* (\$12) by Nancy Berkoff, EdD, RD. Chef Nancy Berkoff has created these unique and good-tasting vegan fish and seafood dishes. After using this book, you'll agree with millions of vegetarians who say: Sea Animals—Don't Eat Them! Inside these 96 pages you will find sections about cooking with vegan 'fish,' 'seafood' stocks and sauces, websites offering vegan 'seafood' products, and info about omega-3 fatty acids for vegans. Avoid fish but still enjoy the taste of the sea with 'Fish' Sticks, Ethiopian-Style 'Shrimp' and Sweet Potato Stew, 'Crab' Rangoon, 'Tuna' Salad, Gefilte 'Fish,' Spicy 'Fish' Cakes, and much more!

### Free Children's Handouts

- I Love Animals and Broccoli Coloring Book*  
A coloring book that promotes healthy eating and vegetarianism for children ages 3-7.
  - I Love Animals and Broccoli Shopping Basket*  
An 8-page activity book with a crossword, quizzes, and more, designed for ages 7-11.
  - Vegetarian Nutrition for Teenagers* Brochure  
with all of the basics about veggie nutrition.
- (For these items, a donation to cover printing and postage would be appreciated.)

### Bumper Stickers

- Bumper Stickers** (\$1 each, 10+ \$.50 each)  
"Be Kind to Animals—Don't Eat Them"  
"Vegetarians Are Sprouting Up All Over"

### Vegetarian Journal

*Vegetarian Journal* subscriptions are \$20 per year in the U.S., \$32 in Canada/Mexico, and \$42 in other countries.

### Reprints from *Vegetarian Journal*

Non-Leather Shoes, Belts, Bags, etc. (\$5)  
Guide to Food Ingredients (\$6)

### Order Form

To order, mail to The Vegetarian Resource Group, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203; place your order over the phone Mon-Fri 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern time at (410) 366-8343; fax your order form to (410) 366-8804; or order online at our website <[www.vrg.org](http://www.vrg.org)>.

Check or Money Order (Enclosed)

ITEM	QUANTITY	PRICE	SUBTOTAL
<i>Vegetarian Journal</i> Subscription			

SUBTOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
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**\*SHIPPING AND HANDLING CHARGES**  
 For orders under \$25, add \$6 (\$10 Canada/Mexico) for shipping.  
 For orders over \$25, shipping is free within the continental U.S.  
 For other foreign orders, inquire about shipping charges first.

## Cakewalk Baking Company

By Kristen Lambert

**P**ET ILLNESSES AND ACCIDENTS CAN HAPPEN unexpectedly. When these occasions arise, they bring not only overwhelming feelings of stress, but also a certain financial strain. Many people might decide to work more hours to cover these costs, but every now and then, some individuals will try something different.

When Kelly Green's dog Nelix needed physical therapy and a wheelchair, she was faced with the challenge of raising money.

Since she was already a committed vegan and animal welfare activist, she decided to go for something that she had experience in—baking vegan treats. Raising money for Nelix's medical costs was just a beginning, though; the demand for vegan desserts in Salt Lake City, Utah, was pretty high. This is how Cakewalk Baking Company got its start.

Cakewalk has a variety of delicious vegan treats, ranging from typical desserts such as cakes, cupcakes, pies, and cookies to harder-to-find items like baklava, cream puffs, éclairs, and a line of cream-filled snack cakes called 'dillos' that resemble vegan Twinkies. In addition, many of the treats listed above can be prepared gluten-free!

The bakery follows strict standards to make sure everything they produce is as vegan and environmentally friendly as possible. "All of our desserts are 100 percent vegan—including all vegan sugars—and cholesterol-free, and we use organic and fair trade ingredients whenever possible," Kelly explains. "We are run by an entirely vegan staff and are dedicated to green practices. We recycle, compost, and use vegan and non-toxic cleaning products in our bakery."

But why choose to open a vegan bakery? Kelly says, "A humane lifestyle is the only way I am comfortable with living. Being aware of the suffering that animal products cause ... Well, that's enough for me to dedicate myself to encourage change in every way that I can for the rest of my life."

Kelly doesn't only help vegans getting their sugar fix, though. "Cakewalk does a lot of fundraising and often donates to animal rights and animal welfare

groups, sanctuaries, etc., ... We also have treats in a lot of local coffee shops, which I like to think of as a sort of vegan outreach effort." So, not only can patrons enjoy a delicious concoction, but they can contribute to a good cause, too!

Vegans and vegetarians should keep in mind that people from all different backgrounds enjoy sweets, and one of the easiest ways to persuade someone that they will not miss out on foods they enjoy while following a vegan diet is through desserts. With

Cakewalk as a resource, convincing others to adopt a more humane lifestyle is, well, a piece of cake.

What more could you ask from a vegan bakery? How about, "Where can I buy these amazing desserts?"

The 'dillos' variety is available through the mail. To order, visit <[www.cakewalkbakingcompany.com](http://www.cakewalkbakingcompany.com)>.

If you are in Utah, make sure you visit their storefront, located at 566 West 1350 South, Suite 900, Woods Cross, UT 84010. Their phone number is (801) 693-8520.



Kelly Green at Cakewalk Baking Company

Kristen Lambert wrote this article while doing an internship with The Vegetarian Resource Group.



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## Introducing the Redesigned VRG Website

Thank you to longtime VRG volunteer Heather Gorn for being so instrumental in helping The VRG redesign its website. Check out the great new look at [www.vrg.org](http://www.vrg.org)! Also, send your family and friends to the site for tasty recipes, nutrition news, ingredient information, VRG's online veggie-friendly restaurant guide for the U.S. and Canada, plus much, much more!



## And Don't Forget About Our Scholarships!



Each year, The Vegetarian Resource Group awards two \$5,000 college scholarships to graduating U.S. high school students who have promoted vegetarianism in their schools and/or communities. Applicants are judged on having shown compassion, courage, and a strong commitment to promoting a peaceful world through a vegetarian diet and lifestyle. The annual application deadline is February 20 immediately before the student graduates from high school. Please visit [www.vrg.org/student/scholar.htm](http://www.vrg.org/student/scholar.htm) to learn more!

Printed on recycled paper!